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Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk June 12, 2016
East edition No 716

SPORT

Fan recalls 'donkey' Roy Hodgson

Memories of England boss' playing days right here

DEVELOPMENT

Battle of the countryside

Campaigners' fears over major proposals

ROYAL

Party time for her 90th

We look behind the scenes at her visits as county holds birthday street parties

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Why the Queen has our royal seal of approval

IN the highly unlikely event I was to survive to the ripe old age of 90, were I still to be as agile and coherent as the Queen appears to be, I would consider that both a triumph of good luck and the wonders of the NHS.

However, a youth spent smoking and a distinct lack of even the slightest whiff of a private hospital ward, would suggest I will be long gone before those I leave behind mark the 90th year since my birth.

The Queen however, is a shining example to us all. Not just as to what a life of luxury and access to the finest medical care brings, but to acting in a way which is both responsible and admirable.

Her 90 years have seen her shine far more sunshine than shadows into people's lives. She has represented us as a nation in a way no other individual can do. There's a lot of clout in seeing or meeting a truly globally recognised personality whose family line in the equivalent of flicking through any history book. She's reliably impressive.

In truth, the same cannot quite be said of the Duke of Edinburgh, popular as he is. A handful of horrifically non-PC comments and we don't forgive him for being from a different generation rather as just a bit of an upper class buffoon.

And therein lies perhaps the Queen's greatest trick. Despite the voice and the crown, we all accept her as 'one of us'. The class war may embody what the royal family is a sign of, but she somehow manages to neatly side-step that as she meets and greets countless of us everyday folk. We've even almost forgiven her for pulling off the dream of having two birthdays every year.

So let's celebrate her this weekend and cherish a monarch who we really should all be extremely proud of.

Editor **Chris Britcher**

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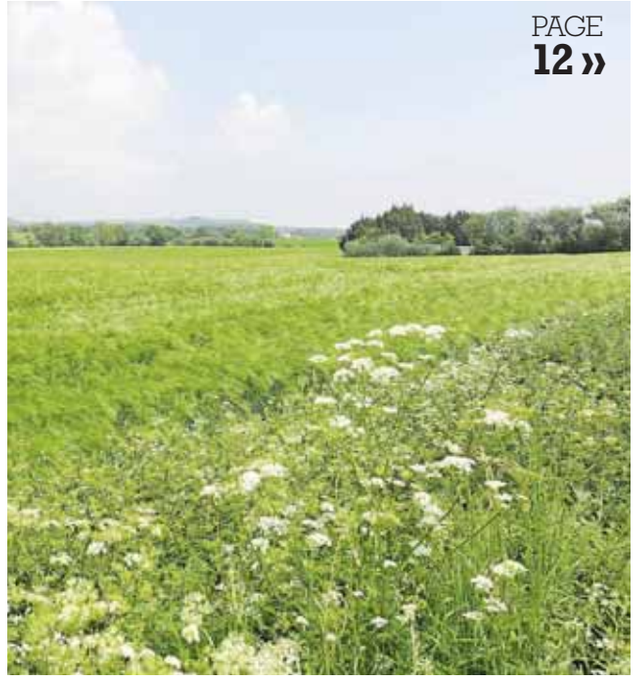

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seven days

Stories which made the headlines @kentnews.co.uk during the past week

Partner pleads guilty to killing EastEnders' star

By Emily Pennink
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

MURDERED: Actress Sian Blake and children Zachary and Amon were buried in their Erith home's garden

THE partner of EastEnders actress Sian Blake is facing life behind bars after admitting murdering her and their two children.

Hairdresser Arthur Simpson-Kent, 49, pleaded guilty to killing his 43-year-old girlfriend and their sons Zachary, eight, and four-year-old Amon between December 12 last year and January 3.

The victims vanished on December 13 and their bodies were found buried in the garden of the family home in Erith, Kent, on January 5.

The following month, Simpson-Kent was arrested at Heathrow Airport after agreeing to his extradition from Ghana where he had fled days after the killings.

Simpson-Kent appeared before Mr Justice Singh at the Old Bailey to enter his pleas.

Wearing a red T-shirt and black trousers, he appeared via video link from Belmarsh jail.

He was remanded in custody ahead of a three-day sentencing from October 4.

Simpson-Kent showed no emotion as he admitted to the killings during the five-minute hearing.

Ms Blake and her children were last seen on December 13 when they visited her family in Leyton.

Det Chief Insp Graeme Gwyn said: "Arthur Simpson-Kent has never given a reason as to why he killed Sian, Zachary and Amon in the way that he did.

"Sian's close-knit family are devastated by the loss of their much loved sister, daughter and cousin. The deaths of Zachary and Amon have compounded their grief and they have lost two entire generations of their family to a violent and completely senseless act of murder at the hands of Simpson-Kent.

"Our efforts to bring Simpson-Kent back to the UK to face justice were greatly expedited by the help we received from the Ghanaian authorities and the National Crime Agency, who alongside us, ensured Simpson-Kent was arrested as soon as possible and returned to the UK.

"We now await the sentence date where I hope the family can get some form of closure for what has been, and continues to be, an incredibly difficult time for them."

Ms Blake played Frankie Pierre in 56 episodes of EastEnders between 1996 and 1997. She was suffering from motor neurone disease before she died.

Could axe still fall on grammar head despite academy plan U-turn?

A GRAMMAR school head teacher forced to scrap plans for a hugely controversial move to become an academy is facing a fight for her job.

Earlier this week Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School (SLGGS) announced, through its governing body, that hugely controversial plans to become an academy and take over the running of struggling nearby non-selective the Spires Academy had been scrapped.

It came after a remarkable backlash from parents, teachers and even pupils.

In a dramatic week, a public meeting planned for Wednesday night to discuss the plans was cancelled 24 hours earlier, as the decision to abandon the proposals were announced. It was set to be fiery with a number of allegations set to be made over the handling of the process and financial allegations.

A number of governors have now resigned and that, say observers, could be key in the future of head teacher Jane Robinson. There is already an online petition set up calling for KCC to hold a formal vote of no confidence in her.

Education advisor and former Gravesend grammar head teacher Peter Read, told KoS on Friday: "I think she's in a very difficult position. I can't see how she can mend the fences but if she is to continue she has to regain the confidence in all these groups that have opposed her.

"The loss of supporters on the governing body may tip the balance against her. There are also allegations about finances, I understand there are a number of complaints by staff and I suggest she may have lost the confidence of her staff."

Staff had previously threatened to strike over the academy plans, while pupils had staged a walk-out, resulting in many of them being handed detentions.

Kent County Council said it would not comment on the issue.

Counter terrorism police make 'Syria-related' arrest

A 31-year-old man was arrested in Margate this week in connection with on-going investigations into terror attacks.

Officers from the West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit joined forces with Kent Police on Thursday to arrest the suspect at an address in Margate.

He was arrested on suspicion of preparing for terrorist acts, which were "Syria-related" according to a police spokesperson.

Police from both divisions have continued to search the address, as part of the pre-planned, intelligence-led arrest.

A spokesperson from the police has said there was no immediate threat to public safety.

Police have released no other details about the investigation.

Teenager death: 21-year-old set for court appearance

A 21-year-old man has been remanded in custody after appearing in court having been charged with murder after the death 17-year-old Becky Anne Morgan last month.

Miss Morgan's body was pulled from the water off the coast of Broadstairs at 7.45am on Sunday May 1, sparking a major investigation.

Kent Police had been called to the scene just after 5am that morning after reports a girl was in the water at the Port of Ramsgate.

Michael Bowditch, of Prestedge Avenue, Ramsgate, has been charged with murder and appeared at Medway Magistrates' Court via video link on Wednesday.

He was remanded in custody to appear at Maidstone Crown Court on Friday, June 10.

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seven days

Stories which made the headlines @kentnews.co.uk during the past week

Question Time fireworks from Quarterhouse

COMEDIAN Eddie Izzard and Ukip leader Nigel Farage were accused of "pantomime" on BBC One's Question Time this week, a broadcast filmed in Folkestone.

The Quarterhouse played host to a fiery debate over the EU referendum but both Mr Izzard and Mr Farage were accused on letting the discussion descend to a playground level as they fought to get their points across before the June 23 vote.

Panellists on the show including leader of the House of Commons, Conservative Chris Grayling MP, Labour's Hilary Benn MP and columnist Alison Pearson.

Host David Dimbleby had to tell both panellists to stop the "pantomomime" at one stage.

A levels set to be ditched as college gets desperate to ease financial crisis

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

CANTERBURY College looks set to scrap teaching all A level courses and close its IT Academy as part of a radical shake-up following the merging of key leadership positions with East Kent College.

And if approved, that will cost nearly 30 jobs.

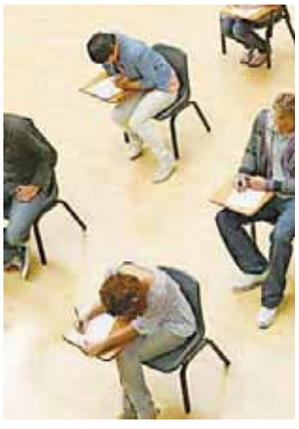
Canterbury has struggled financially and recently confirmed East Kent College will take over key management roles.

Now, as part of its operational review, the board of governors is consulting staff on its decision to stop teaching A levels from September and to close the IT Academy in July.

It would be far from the first college to drop A levels and instead focus on more vocational topics.

Across the sixth form sector, education providers have struggled due to reductions in government funding - schools as well as colleges.

A total of 28 staff have been notified that their jobs are at risk as a result of the two decisions.



EXAMS: Will plans be accepted

The college has made the commitment that if no alternative place of learning is available for learners to complete their course, then it will support the 92 A level students to complete the course at the Canterbury campus.

When the consultation has been completed by June 24, the college will contact each of the young people who have applied to start either A levels or start at the IT Academy in September.

The 18 students at the IT Academy will be offered an alternative place at East Kent College's campuses in Broadstairs, Dover, Folkestone, which offer IT training courses.

Alison Clarke, principal of Canterbury College, said: "Currently our A level provision makes a loss of £200,000 per year due to the small classroom sizes and high staff to pupil ratio, and we are duplicating the work of other local schools, sixth forms and academies."

Chair of governors Colin Carmichael said: "While we recognise these decisions will not be universally welcomed they will help secure the long-term future for Canterbury College and our limited resources elsewhere."

DATING?: Prince Harry

Bookies take bets on Ellie and her prince

RUMOURS that Prince Harry and pop star Ellie Goulding are dating have seen bookmakers publishing odds on him popping the question to the singer.

Harry and Miss Goulding were reportedly seen kissing away from prying eyes during a polo match in Berkshire last month, sparking speculation the pair are an item.

The singer attended the University of Kent at Canterbury before being spotted and put on the road to stardom. She returned to headline Canterbury's Lounge on the Farm festival in 2011.

Bookmaker Coral is offering odds of 5-1 that they confirm they are dating following a flurry of bets after newspaper claims about the couple.

Kensington Palace has declined to comment about the speculation.

Miss Goulding is a friend of the younger members of the royal family, having sung at the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's 2011 wedding reception. She also performed at the closing ceremony of Harry's first Invictus Games in 2014.

The bookmaker has opened betting on things becoming more serious between the two, with odds of 50-1 the prince proposes to the star before the end of next year, and 100-1 that they wed.

Tributes paid after councillor's death

TRIBUTES have been made to Jane Cribbon, a long-standing councillor in Gravesham whose death was announced on Friday.

Cllr Cribbon died at the Ellenor Hospice in Northfleet after a short illness. She was 66.

She had been a Labour member of Gravesham Borough Council since 1999 and was elected to Kent County COuncil in 2013.

Labour group leader John Burden said: "Jane's passionate involvement in every aspect of council work and all the other causes she championed will be sorely missed.

"She was a kind and caring person who committed herself to serving all her constituents, all the time. Our thoughts are with Lee, her family and all her many friends at this sad time."

Conservative council leader John Cubitt said: "Jane was a formidable political opponent but a caring and thoughtful colleague. She leaves a void at the council and I send my deepest condolences to her family."

Wine haul sees shop lose alcohol licence

A CHATHAM shop owner has been banned from selling alcohol following the discovery of more than 180 bottles of wine on which UK duty had not been paid.

Licensing officers worked closely with HM Revenue and Customs and asked for Flamingo News in Salisbury Road's licence to be revoked after the find earlier this year.

Police and customs officers had visited the shop following reports of anti-social behaviour in the surrounding area.

Officers were also made aware that alcohol had been sold to street drinkers who had caused problems, while there were reports of underage sales being made.

Licence holder Vinayakamoorthy Thamilvasan admitted the offence after officers found 247.5 litres of red and white wine where UK duty had not been paid.

PC Clare Cossar said: "We work hard to reduce crime and disorder in the area and are pleased that the licence has been revoked to prevent this shop from being mismanaged anymore."

Fallon's firm visits to support remain bid

SEVENOAKS MP and defence secretary Michael Fallon joined local businesses and Conservative activists in Medway on Thursday to make the case for remaining in the European Union.

In the latest effort to whip up support for the remain campaign, the Tory big hitter visited high-tec defence firm BAE Systems in Rochester and then manufacturer Aeromet. Both companies are firm supporters of remaining in the EU,

Mr Fallon said: "Success stories like BAE and Aeromet show the importance of Britain's EU membership for our manufacturing industry, particularly in the defence sector. In the south east, over 500,000 jobs and £19 billion of exports are linked to our membership of the EU. Leaving would be a big gamble on an uncertain future."

Mike Twyman, Kent operations director at Aeromet, said: "Over 65 per cent of the output of our Rochester foundry is exported to customers based in the EU and continued unhindered access to the single market is essential to our growth strategy."

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Vets back bluetongue vaccine but say more detail is needed

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

NEWS that a bluetongue vaccine will be available next month to support farmers in managing a predicted outbreak of the disease this summer has been backed by veterinary chiefs.

The British Veterinary Association (BVA) and similar organisations have all welcomed the announcement ahead of forecasts that bluetongue could reach mainland UK before the end of the summer - with Kent and the south east highlighted as being at most risk.

Bluetongue is a non-contagious, insect-borne, viral disease that affects the reproduction of mainly sheep but also other animals including cattle, goats, buffalo and deer, and is transmitted by the midge Culicoides imicola.

Since the Defra risk assessment indicated a high risk of incursion from France, veterinary associations have been involved in discussions with government, farmers' representatives and manufacturers to ensure a vaccine is available to meet potential demand.

BVA president Sean Wensley said: "This disease seriously affects animal health and welfare as well as the productivity of livestock, and vaccination is the key control.

THREAT: The reproduction of sheep could be at risk

"While it is good news that vaccine will be available, we know that both farmers and vets will have questions about cost and whether there will a limit to the amount of vaccine available in July.

"It would be helpful to have these questions clarified as soon as possible."

The National Farmers Union (NFU), has also backed the move, as livestock chairman Charles Sercombe said: "This is really welcome news for the industry and we strongly urge farmers to discuss vaccination with their vet in order to fully understand the risk to their business considering their system and geography.

"These conversations should be ongoing because as the situation in France and mainland Europe changes the risk will change in the UK.

"We are calling on manufacturers and vets to be clear on the vaccine pricing and availability."

The disease struck one farmer's cattle in Boughton Aluph, near Ashford, in 2007.

Jail term after Nazi salute during protest

A 42-year-old far right supporter recorded giving a Nazi salute during a demonstration in Dover in January has been jailed for two years.

Mark Pearson, 42, of Chester-le-Street, joined in as far-right and anti-fascist groups clashed in the town on January 30.

He was also seen throwing objects at people during the demonstrations, and pleaded guilty to violent disorder at Canterbury Crown Court.

Libraries roll out free WiFi across Medway

ALL libraries in Medway are now offering free internet access following a £70,000 project to further improve the service.

Library goers can now take advantage of free WiFi in any council-run library, enabling them to download the thousands of free eBooks and eAudiobooks on site on to their tablets.

Chief constable hires

ASSISTANT chief constable Tony Blaker has joined Kent Police's senior management team after 25 years serving at neighbouring Sussex Police.

He joins the team after the retirement of ACC Rob Price. Mr Price's role was temporarily filled by ACC Neil Jerome, who is leaving Kent to join the Metropolitan Police.

Drink drive warning as fans flock to pubs for Euro 2016

DRINK drivers are being warned of a zero tolerance approach to anyone getting behind the wheel while over the limit during the Euro 2016 football tournament.

Kent County Council's road safety team say one in six fatal crashes involves a driver who has been drinking, and even the smallest amount of alcohol can dangerously affect driving.

It is encouraging fans to plan ahead by arranging alternative ways of getting home.

It adds pubs can help out by ensuring that local taxi numbers and bus timetables are available.

KCC road safety team leader Vicky Watkins said: "If you get behind the wheel after even one drink, you're risking not only your life, but the lives of any road users you encounter.

"The message is clear and simple – one drink is not worth the risk. Book a taxi or ensure you have a designated driver for the evening. There's no yellow card for drink driving, just a penalty.

"Driving after just one drink can double the chances of having a crash and at twice the legal limit makes drivers 30 times more likely to cause a crash."

Progress for the pylons as hearings get under way

CONTROVERSIAL plans to build a pylon route between Richborough and Canterbury have powered forward.

A timetable was set out this week by the planning inspectorate for its formal six month examination period, which will include a series of hearings which started on Thursday.

When the examination period finishes, the planning inspectorate will have three months to make a recommendation to the energy secretary as to whether or not the application should be approved.

Amber Rudd will then have a further three months to make the final decision.

The link will carry power pumped in via the Nemo Link – where excess power from the continent is pumped into Richborough, near Sandwich.

The pylons are then needed to take that power to a sub station in Canterbury so it can feed into the National Grid.

However, it has attracted criticisms due to the size of the pylons needed, and the fact they will cut across countryside.

During the examination period, the planning inspectorate will also ask for the opinions of those who have registered an interest and may invite them to speak at the public hearings or provide a written response.

Steve Self, project manager at National Grid, which has submitted the application, said: "We'd like to thank everyone for their involvement over the last three years; their views have been vital in helping us shape our final proposals."

Images of Kent winner

GREG Salmon, of New Ash Green, has won a pair of tickets to the Leeds Castle Classical Concert this summer – courtesy of the image he sent into our weekly Images of Kent page. Find out how you can get your image published and be in with a chance of winning by turning inside this edition.

Scam police warning

A WARNING has been issued after reports a fraudster claiming to be a police officer has been ringing people in the county claiming their debit card has been scammed and asking for details.

Anyone receiving such a call should not give out any details and report it to the police.

Simply Red set for gig

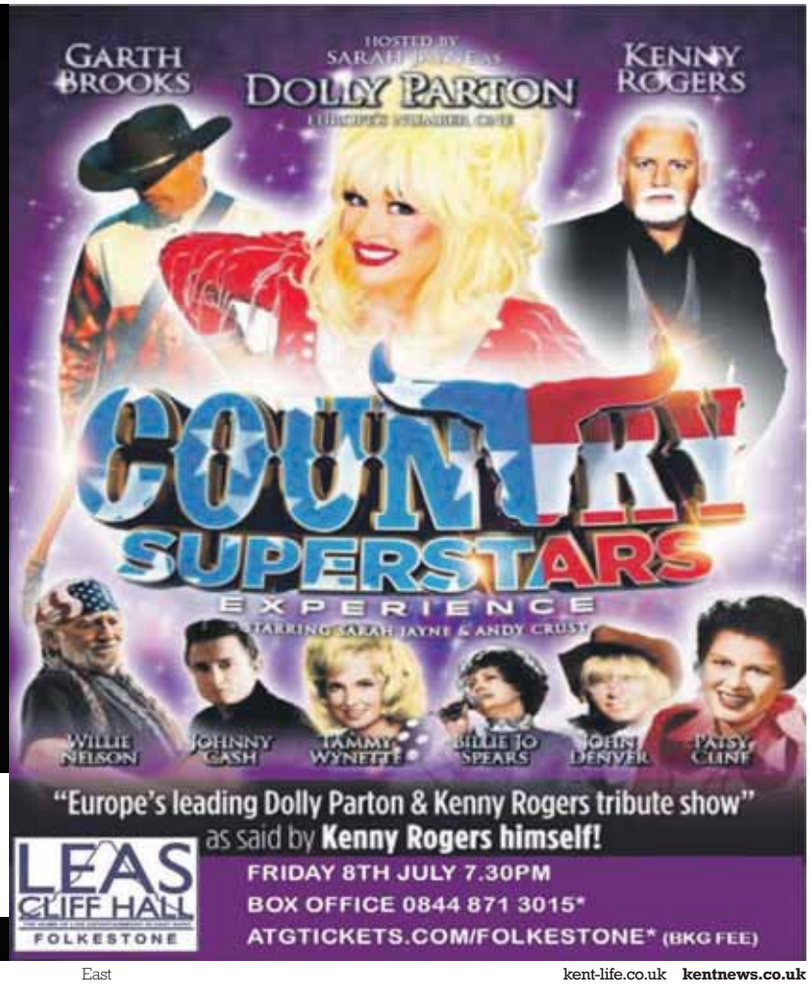
THOUSANDS of music fans will flock to the St Lawrence Ground in Canterbury next Saturday to watch Simply Red perform live at the cricket ground.

Singer Mick Hucknall is expected to play a string of the band's biggest hits on June 18. Tickets are still available.

Wind farm bursaries

STUDENTS in Canterbury, Faversham and Whitstable have until June 24 to apply for a £3,000-a-year university bursary scheme offered by the London Array wind farm.

It is open to students within a 15-mile radius of the onshore substation at Cleve Hill. See londonarray.com for details.



Top Three Stories

1. Paedo given life terms

Long jail term for vile Richard Huckle

2. Teenagers beach rescue

Drama as tide cuts them off

3. College scraps A levels

Nearly 30 staff set to be axed too

The Essential Guide:

...to Operation Stack

All you need to know about the infamous lorry park system on our roads

FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: Huge crowds heading to the Bromley Motoring Pageant last weekend to feast their eyes on models through the years. You can see more pictures by turning to page 36 of this edition.

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Top Three Blogs

1. Time to drop Wayne

Let's not keep selecting Man Utd star

2 Betting just too much

Take care when you place a wager

3. Power of nostalgia

How it connects us with our youth

Results of the *KoS* Online Poll

In 18 months time, who will be prime minister?

1. David Cameron - 32%
2. Boris Johnson - 29%
3. George Osborne - 0%
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County's great are named in honours' list

From broadcasters to volunteers at scout groups, there was plenty to celebrate after the Queen's Birthday Honours were revealed on Friday night. **Chris Britcher** takes a look at some of our great and good who will collect their awards this year

HAPPY: Whitstable's Janet Street-Porter, above left, collected a CBE. Brian Blessed got an OBE

SINGER: Rod Stewart was awarded a knighthood

JANET Street-Porter has been given a CBE in the Queen's birthday honour's list.

The broadcaster, who has a home in Whitstable, joins a host of people from across the county to collect an award.

Ms Street-Porter was honoured for services to journalism and broadcasting.

Also collecting a CBE were Major Simon Dean, from Tunbridge Wells, founder and chief executive officer of Challenger Troop CIC, which runs military-ethos based education programmes. He was rewarded for services to education.

Lisa Phillips, who hails from the county, from the Department for International Development collected a CBE for her work.

OBEs went to Gillingham's Stephen Gillespie for services to UK border security and Martin Greenstreet, from Tunbridge Wells, for services to defence.

MBEs were awarded to Harriet Ackunson, from Swanley, for services to faith groups and Elizabeth Brooker who lives in the county, for services to road safety in her role at the London Borough of Lewisham.

Stephen Clement from the Home Office, who lives in Broadstairs, also collected the honour for services to border protection and investigations.

Margaret Malpas, joint co-chair of the British Dyslexia Association collected an MBE for services to education, as did Ellen Kilcullen, from Swanley, for services to young people.

Other MBEs went to Sittingbourne's Ann Noble, former head of the Tydeman Centre at The Malling School, for services to education.

Lea Ragsdell from the Cabinet Office, who lives in Tunbridge Wells, was honoured for public service, as was Jonathan Reynolds for services to technology.

Paul Rochester, senior policy officer at the Department of Energy and Climate Change, received an MBE for services to improving standards in the microgeneration sector and voluntary service, as did Harshbir Sangha from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills for services to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Canterbury cricket coach David Sear collected an MBE for services to girls and women's cricket.

There were also similar awards for Aylesford's Alfred Smith, for services to No 10 Downing Street, and Sheerness' Rev Cindy Kent-Winsley for services to religious broadcasting.

Collecting a British Empire Medal (BEM), were Goudhurst's Jacqueline Clark for her work with the Goudhurst Scout Group, James Cooper in Canterbury, for voluntary service to veterans, and Cyril Emden for services to the community in Folkestone.

Cranbrook's Thomas Fisher received one for services to the community and under-privileged young people in London; Michael Marshall for services to Capel-le-Ferne and Pauline Panton for services to Tunstall and Sittingbourne.

Broadstairs' Brian Sleightholm, founder and president of the St Peter's Village Tour also picked one up for services to tourism in Kent.

Famous people picking up other awards included veteran singer Rod Stewart who was giving an knighthood and orbiting British astronaut Tim Peake who was given a CMG – a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George.

Forces sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn, 99, who sang wartime classic (They'll Be Bluebirds Over) The White Cliffs of Dover became a Companion of Honour.

TV duo Ant and Dec received OBEs for services to broadcasting and entertainment, as did actor Brian Blessed for services to the arts and charity.

SUCCESS: Dame Vera Lynn, above left, and TV's Ant and Dec

Garden city and lorry park plans 'will destroy Garden of England'

Tom Pyman reports on growing concerns in the east of the county where a double header of major development plans threatens to change forever the look of treasured areas of our countryside...

CAMPAIGNERS opposed to large-scale development in Shepway say the area's identity is under threat.

Local and central government are looking to accelerate a number of plans to develop on greenfield land in the east of the county to ease some of Kent's most crippling issues.

One of the biggest projects, as discussed in KoS last week, is a proposed lorry park "the size of Disneyland" designed to hold 3,600 trucks.

The park is earmarked for Stanford, off junction 11 of the M20, and Highways England believes it is the best long-term solution to Operation Stack, which brought much of the county to a halt last summer.

Campaigners received a boost in their fight, however, when a transport select committee report said it believed the plans to be "rushed" and that MPs needed to do more to justify the £250m spend.

In addition to this, locals are strongly opposing plans to build a garden town – similar to the one currently being developed in Ebbsfleet – near Sellindge, because they worry it will blight the picturesque landscape, and have a detrimental impact on the environment.

Shepway District Council says the garden town planned for the Otterpool Park site will deliver up to 12,000 homes to help ease the UK's housing crisis, and decided to make an official expression of interest to the government on Wednesday night.

Debbie Burton of the SOS Kent (Smarter Options than Stanford) group, told KoS that she fears for the long-term future of the district.

"We're under threat of losing our identity, and we think we are being targeted from all angles – it's wrong," she said.

"We want to preserve the Garden of England but they are intent on destroying it.

"They need local support to make this work, but how do they expect to do that when they just lie to people?

"Some 12,000 homes is an abstract figure but that equates to 28,500 people – double the population of Hythe – how is the area supposed to absorb that?

"This is not the best solution, it's just a lazy attempt at a quick fix."

With funding from central government drying up year-on-year, local authorities are under real pressure to deliver housing that will serve residents.

Last month, Canterbury council missed out on some 200 homes in its own city, after it was outbid by the London borough of Redbridge.

Kent is having to shoulder the burden of a population overspill from the capital, on top of its already-packed waiting lists, and with financial benefits offered by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for the development of garden towns and cities, they are seen as a perfect opportunity.

The government states that in order to receive support, proposed garden towns must provide at least 10,000 new homes, either through 'transformational development' of an existing settlement, or a site away from existing settlements.

However, the scale of the development troubles those living in the area, and there were reportedly almost 500 people present at a march in opposition to the plans last weekend, as campaigners walked in force from Newingreen and Sellindge, before joining to meet in the middle at the Airport Cafe.

Green councillor on Kent County Council Martin Whybrow said: "This is not in any way a sustainable development.

"If you look at the infrastructure in this small part of the country, it's creaking at the seams – roads are getting clogged up and hospitals are struggling to cope.

"The double-whammy of this and the Stack lorry park is a real blow to residents, both schemes have come out of the blue.

"You have got to ask the question of how far can they push so many people?

"They're building quite large pockets of very unhappy people across a number of areas and to me the only way forward now appears to be political change.

"We do need homes and we're seeing them pop up in brownfield sites to fill in some gaps but it's usually luxury apartments and second homes.

"There's no affordable or social housing and it's doing nothing to help this crisis."

PROTEST: Groups are fighting what they fear will be the loss of the area's identity

Hilary Newport, director of the Kent branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) added: "We are under siege.

"It's disturbing to see these plans going forward and it seems the government is willing to get homes built at any cost.

"We could be focusing a lot more on the brownfield land that we have because using it can provide up to a million homes.

"We are bearing the brunt of London's problems because the system is broken and people are being priced out.

"In a climate where councils are being starved of money, I understand then looking to schemes where they get a direct incentive in the form of a housing bonus.

"We are happy to support systematic development like that in Ebbsfleet, but in this case the plans are completely misguided and we should be looking to do things a lot more intelligently."

Despite the widespread criticism, however, Shepway council leader David Monk stood by the plans.

"I don't agree that the area will lose its identity," he said.

"They don't know what they are opposing, it's that simple.

"It's a knee-jerk reaction because this is the most marvellous opportunity to come this way in a long time.

"We use brownfield land when we can, but this has a very green agenda, all the houses will be eco-friendly, and research shows that gardens like what we're proposing are far more biodiverse than muddy fields.

"We need to protect our future generations – I grew up in the 1950s where we were selfish and had an 'I'm alright Jack' attitude. We can't do that again."

MARCH: More than 500 joined protest last weekend

One of the biggest criticisms this week was the council's decision to exclude members of the public from a crucial stage of the discussion on Wednesday night.

Cllr Whybrow said: "The lack of transparency and democracy is sadly not surprising and what we have come to expect from Shepway District Council.

"We have seen them operate like this in the past - if they can, they will keep it all behind closed doors, and that doesn't help their cause against all this opposition.

"I don't see why a publicly-elected council needs to be this secretive."

Cllr Monk, however, insisted it was entirely necessary: "Our discussions were behind closed doors because they featured commercially sensitive information," he said.

"I hate doing it and I much prefer to have talks out in the open but I think they're trying to make a conspiracy out of nothing. Of course we will listen if the level of opposition increases but this is a very early stage of a project that would take 30 years to deliver."

Final decisions on which expressions of interest to support will be made by DCLG ministers in the light of advice from officials.

CAMPAIGN: Groups fighting lorry park and plans for 12,000 homes

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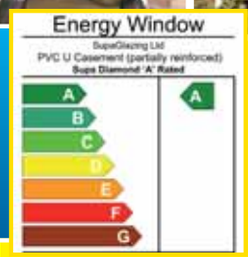

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Roy Hodgson was crowned king of England

In a special report on the weekend the Euro 2016 tournament kicks off, we look back at the Kent roots of three key members of England's team and how they made their start in the beautiful game playing for our football teams...

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

ON the golden anniversary of England's World Cup triumph, there are quiet whispers that this Three Lions side could be the one to finally end 50 years of hurt this summer.

As they travelled over the Channel this week to begin their Euro 2016 campaign, they were led by a man whose roots are firmly in the county.

Roy Hodgson, at 68, has a wealth of footballing experience under his belt but some would argue it was his stint in Kent as a player that toughened him up and helped make him the respected man he is today.

Operating as both a defender and a midfielder, Hodgson enjoyed stints at Tonbridge An-

SMALLING'S BIG IMPACT AT THE TOP

A COMMANDING figure at the heart of the England defence, Chris Smalling will likely be one of the first names on Hodgson's teamsheet throughout the tournament.

The 26-year-old has developed into one of the finest centre-halves in the country, having racked up more than 200 appearances for Manchester United, with whom he has also won two Premier League titles and an FA Cup.

Smalling has also worn the armband for the Red Devils on occasion, and is earmarked by many as a future captain for his country.

But it was here in Kent that he made his name, developing under the watch of Maidstone United chief executive Bill Williams, who says he has come a long way.

He told KoS: "We got him on trials from Millwall and I remember our youth management team telling me we had a couple of good lads that I should come and see. There was this one guy who was really impressive - tall, slim and athletic, but he also had a massive afro, which made him really stand out, I suppose.

"That was the first time I saw Chris and it was quickly apparent that he had all the credentials.

"We've seen before with the likes of Warren Barton and Gary Breen, you realise pretty quickly who the special talents are."

While still at school and, like most of his friends, eyeing up the prospect of a university degree, Smalling was placed in the Maidstone first team and continued to impress, earning England schoolboy call-ups in the process.

He was eventually snapped up by Fulham, and expecting him to go onto even bigger and better things, Mr Williams tried to negotiate clauses, meaning the club would financially benefit from any future sale of the player, or when he made a certain number of international appearances, but Hodgson refused.

"We probably didn't make as much out of Chris as we could have done, which is frustrating," he admitted.

However, while Smalling's ability was never in question, Mr Williams recalls a timid teenager that certainly didn't appear the natural leader he has developed into today.

"He was a very quiet lad," he said.

"At times I wanted him to be a bit more aggressive and lead the team more but he was young and we're all delighted to be associated with him and his story."

READY: England prepare at their France training camp this week ahead of Saturday night's opening group stage fixture against Russia. The next fixture will be the eagerly anticipated clash with Wales on Thursday afternoon. Will it be a glorious start for England boss Roy Hodgson (inset)?

gels, Gravesend and Northfleet (now Ebbsfleet United), Maidstone and Ashford Town during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Charles Webster, who used to watch Hodgson on the terraces at Gravesend and Northfleet as a youngster, recalls his memories of the England boss's playing career.

"A good word to describe him would be earnest," he told KoS.

"Roy was by no means the most talented player in the team but he was a hard-working graft-

Continued on page 16

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Continued from page 15

er and you could see that he was a student of the game.

"He wasn't flashy or creative or someone that particularly caught the eye, he just got on with the job – closing players down and distributing the ball to his more creative teammates.

"To be honest he didn't demonstrate anything that would suggest he would go on to be a top manager – he wasn't a leader on the pitch and in a team full of bigger characters I don't think he ever became a fans' favourite."

Hodgson's stint in north Kent was brief, making 59 appearances in the 1970/71 season after joining from Tonbridge, and Mr Webster admits the spell is unlikely to feature among Hodgson's fondest memories.

"I don't think he looks back on his time here with a huge amount of affection, to be honest, a lot of fans were quite cruel to him and gave him a fair bit of stick," he said.

"I remember one game at Cheltenham, the ball went out for a throw-in so he chased after it and one guy from the stands was shouting something like 'come on Hodgson, you donkey!'

"Roy was just stood there with the ball against his hip, he turned around and said 'you're not here as well, are you?'.

"It's one thing getting a bit of stick at home but I think he was a bit upset to see them travel away as well and do the same."

After leaving Gravesend and Northfleet in 1971, Hodgson moved to Maidstone, where he made a total of 35 appearances, scoring two goals, before being released by the Stones.

Current Maidstone United chairman Bill Williams joined the club after Hodgson had departed the following year, but their paths crossed on a number of occasions.

"I didn't know Roy personally but I came across him every now and then," he said.

"He always had that aura of being a thinker, there's no doubting his intelligence.

"You come across those people who plan more towards coaching, often because they're not good enough players, and without being cruel I think Roy was one of those."

Mr Williams went on to manage Durban United in South Africa while Hodgson was a player/coach with Berea Park in Pretoria.

"It's funny because I think we beat his team 7-1 when we met and I think he was swiftly moved on again, so you wouldn't have thought he'd have gone on to be a top manager back then," he said.

"But if you look there aren't a great deal of top players who go on to be great managers."

They met again when Hodgson was in charge of Fulham, and looked to acquire the services of a young defender by the name of Chris Smalling.

"We had a funny run-in one time actually," Mr Williams said.

"I'd bought this big TV for my granddaughter for Christmas because I knew this guy who went on to become a rep at LG, who were one of Fulham's main sponsors at the time.

"But then I got delivered the wrong one, it turned out to be for Roy's wife, and he had mine, so I had to ring up Chris and arrange a swap on Christmas Eve."

Throughout his managerial career, Hodgson's mild-mannered, down-to-earth demeanour has seen him earn plenty of popularity, and, a cynic might argue, a bit of extra leeway after two disappointing international tournaments thus far.

"What he has shown is that he's quite academic in his approach and rather than start his managerial career in the lower leagues he went overseas," Mr Webster added.

"That was very unusual and even now you look back and very few have made the same step, and even fewer have gone and succeeded – David Moyes and Gary Neville really struggled recently.

"It proved to be the grounding that has gone on to lead him to what you have to say is the top job in English football.

"He speaks several languages and is a very intelligent and articulate man.

"He had to work hard to be a moderate player and he has taken that ethic into management.

"He appears to be a calming influence, and you don't read tabloid headlines about him having affairs with supermodels – to a lot of people he's probably quite dull.

"Roy has learned a lot of lessons from the 2014 World Cup and wants a balance in the squad.

"I think we're going to see a different England this summer."

RYAN'S RELENTLESS RISE

PERHAPS something of a late bloomer, Ryan Bertrand was a relative unknown when he was thrown into the deepest of ends in 2012 after being picked to start in Chelsea's Champions League final against Bayern Munich.

An assured, confident display, arguably not even in his favoured position on the left of midfield, introduced the then-22-year-old to the wider world.

While struggling to nail down a regular place at Stamford Bridge where his path has been blocked by big-money signings, Bertrand has impressed in subsequent stints at Aston Villa and Southampton, and now had a handful of England caps to his name.

It was at Gillingham, though, where he really learnt his trade, and the club's schoolboy development manager, Bryan Bull, told KoS it was obvious even from an early age that Bertrand was destined for the top.

"Ryan had it all really - he was athletic and technically very good and he's an August baby so it was always even more impressive seeing him stand out knowing he was one of the youngest.

"But what really set him apart for me was his confidence and the mental assurance he has.

"Everyone as a kid says they're going to make it but some mean it more than others and Ryan was one of those.

"He's also incredibly adaptable - he's comfortable at left-back or left-midfield but when Chelsea first came to look at him he was playing as a forward and was still the one who stood out.

"There's a little bit of regret that we didn't get to keep him for longer but we've never wanted to stand in a player's way and we're delighted to have seen him do so well."

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The estate on which you build your own house

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

FOR anyone looking for the house of their dreams, more often than not the decision comes down to an issue of compromise. But what if you could build your own?

Perceived as the preserve of those appearing on Channel 4's Grand Designs, the reality is that more and more people are taking the plunge.

And one development site in Kent is offering just that opportunity – to design and build exactly what your heart desires, within reason, alongside other like-minded property developers.

The self-build 'estate' is in Sandwich where plots start at £265,000.

Whilst you can't quite build a replica of Canterbury Cathedral or a French chateau, buyers do have a relatively free hand on what they put on the 19 available plots.

It has to at least blend in and satisfy planners. But after that, the sky is the limit for buyers at Hammill Park.

The company behind it said: "Hammill Park is a rare opportunity to purchase a self build housing plot on which to build your own Grand Design.

"Located close to Sandwich, Canterbury and the road network, this peaceful rural spot is ideal for families seeking space and a relaxed lifestyle."

Self-build sites are not new, but the firm behind the site, Quinn Estates, says this is Kent's largest self-build scheme and is the redevelopment of a redundant and derelict former brickworks

The Woodnesborough site is now slowly being transformed into an executive housing development.

It is a far cry from its origins as the former home to the Hammill family brickworks, which was established after the First World War to produce paving bricks for the streets of Paris.

Previously, it has been designated a coal mine, and although various buildings for the mine were constructed, no working shaft was ever dug.

Now Quinn, which owns the 14-acre site, has cleared part of it for the self-build project.

It laid roads and services including water, drainage and power to each of the 19 large plots.

Those purchasing the plots are then free to build their dream home, having secured the necessary planning permissions from the planning department at Dover District Council, the company said.

Managing director Mark Quinn said: "We have owned the old brickworks for some time waiting for the right type of redevelopment opportunity of an old brownfield site.

"The government wants to see one million new homes built in the next five years, and it has a range of schemes to get people building their own homes to help meet that target.

Self-build is becoming an option for more and more people and we're currently seeing some 10,000 new self-build properties a year across the country.

"Projects such as this are also a great way of bringing brownfield land formally used by industry back into use, improving the environment and landscape while, at the same time, reducing the need to build on greenfield sites."

The new homes at Hammill Park will be a mix of four and five-bed properties, and many include green technologies such as air-source heating to reduce running costs and minimise their impact on the environment.

Kent resident Mark Wynn has bought one of the plots and is near completing his new home.

Mr Wynn said: "Building a new home for my young family, having a house just as you want it, creating a space to suit your needs and installing things like energy efficient heating systems has been a fantastic project.

"I can see that it won't suit everyone, it has certainly been a steep learning curve for me, but there is help out there and if you are determined then a self-build project is certainly worth considering. We are looking forward to moving in to our new home in a few weeks."

Quinn Estates said self-build projects were exempted by the government from the usual developer contributions payable to the local authority, making them more affordable to those wanting to build their own home.

Through the self-build and custom housebuilding act 2015, local councils have a duty to maintain a register of people who wish to build their own home on a serviced plot of land - land already prepared for house-building and connected to utilities.

Government has set aside £150m in funding to create up to 10,000 serviced plots, and the National Planning Policy Framework requires local councils to identify demand for self-build and make provision for it in their local development plans.

SITE: Buy the plot of land then construct the house of your dreams

POPULAR: The desire to self-build is being fuelled by the likes of Channel 4 TV show Grand Designs, which is hosted by the popular Kevin McCloud

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PLANNING: She's been a regular visitor over the years, but did you know every visit is planned months in advance and to clear time scales.

So just how do you prepare for when the Queen comes for tea?

Kent has been blessed over the years with numerous visits by Her Majesty, but what few people quite appreciate is the months, or years, of planning for her arrival. **Simon Allin** asks those who know best

CELEBRATIONS will take place across the county this weekend as the nation salutes the Queen's official birthday - and her landmark 90th.

The county has been a popular port of call for the monarch during her long reign – blending official visits with those to see family and friends in the county.

Most notably, a number of visits when her daughter Princess Anne – now the Princess Royal – attended the plush Benenden School in the 1960s, and normally hush-hush visits to Lady Brabourne at her retreat in Mersham, near Ashford.

And those who encounter the Queen on her visits paint a picture of a dutiful monarch with a warm personality, a sense of humour and a genuine enthusiasm for the achievements of her subjects.

While months of meticulous planning predate a royal visit to ensure the day goes as smoothly as possible, a few surprises can nevertheless lie in store.

And all the planning in the world can't avoid the vicissitudes of the great British weather.

In 2011, the Queen visited the Turner Contemporary art gallery in Margate to mark its opening, where she met the artist Tracey Emin, who was brought up in the town.

Victoria Pomery, director of the Turner Contemporary, said the Queen wanted to meet people who had been involved in the gallery's development and construction, and she was particularly keen to speak to children. "It probably took just under a year to prepare for the visit," she explained to KoS. "It is very carefully choreographed and timings are very important in terms of making sure that everyone who was supposed to meet the Queen got an opportunity to do so.

"She seemed very relaxed and had a very charming manner; she had lots of people to talk to and she did that in a very confident and assured way.

"We were delighted she accepted our invitation. It was made clear to us she wanted to meet as many people as possible who were involved in the Turner Contemporary over the years.

"She wanted to meet the architects, and she was keen to meet children and young people, so we had to organise for all those people to be in the same building at the same time.

"She arrived in the morning and spent an hour or so in the gallery meeting people and stayed for lunch. She and the Duke of Edinburgh then went back to London in the afternoon, so she had a long period of time here."

While she was in Margate, the Queen also visited the town's lifeboat station, which is a short walk away from the gallery.

Peter Barker, volunteer press officer at RNLI Margate, revealed that the Queen has an impeccable sense of timing.

"It started months in advance, the planning, and time was the biggest factor," he said. "The Queen only had so many minutes to spend with us, so we had to fit in fundraisers, staff and families, and work out how long she would have.

"We were told not to worry because she knows exactly how long she has with each person and there's no need to tell her when to speed up and slow down.

"She got round to meeting and speaking to every member of our crew and families; it was an interesting experience.

"She was very nice, and we were obviously nervous, but she was relaxed, which made us feel relaxed, so she could ask about the operations round Margate, and it was a very enjoyable day for all of us.

"She was interested in how we run.

"She spent about 20 minutes here, which seemed a long time. It was quite rewarding that she was able to get round and meet virtually every

Continued on page 20

COUNTY SET FOR STREET PARTY FUN

STREET parties will be taking place across the county this weekend, as communities collectively cross their fingers and pray for good weather.

The last time parties took place was in 2012 to mark her Diamond Jubilee.

Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling will see the most with 13 each, and there are at least three in every other of the county's boroughs and districts, with 90 taking place in all. More are expected – but those are the ones where the council has had to grant permission for roads to be closed.

In addition, there will be a host of other events taking place to mark the occasion.

The main focus will be in The Mall today (Sunday) where 10,000 people will gather to attend a huge street party outside Buckingham Palace.

The Patrons Lunch will see invited guests from charities and organisations close to the Queen and for which she is a patron, while thousands of others entered a lottery to be in with a chance of

buying one of the £150 tickets. Guests will be treated to a special Marks & Spencer hamper put together for the event.

But for many, it will all about uniting with friends and neighbours.

Mike Hill is cabinet member for community services at Kent County Council.

He explains: "I have met the Queen several times, the last time was when she opened the Turner Contemporary in Margate, which was a magnificent day.

"She has been on a number of visits here and it is very clear, she has won her place in the hearts of the people of Kent.

"Reaching 90 is absolutely super. We are delighted at KCC to be involved too. There are many street parties all over Kent, which is very good news."

Community events will be taking place in towns and villages across the weekend.

Queen's Official 90th Birthday

Continued from page 19

individual. She signed the visitors' book at the end, so it was a good day all round."

In 2015, the Queen visited the National Memorial to the Few at Capel-le-Ferne to officially open its new visitor centre, The Wing.

Malcolm Triggs, a spokesman for the trust, said the planning took months to ensure the building was completed on time – and it was only finished the night before the visit.

"There were months of planning and it was over within an hour, but it was still a fantastic event," he said. "It was great to see her, and she enjoyed it.

"A lot of the planning involved getting the right number of people and volunteers, trustees and the school children to meet her, as well as making sure she could see the whole of the site in 45 minutes.

"It was horrible weather, but people were able to see her briefly.

"Veterans of the Battle of Britain were there, and they were a fundamentally important part of it."

Jules Gomez, the site manager at the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust, added: "I have had some special days, but that is one that will stay with me for the rest of my life.

"We talked about how long it took to build The Wing, and we spoke about our volunteers - she asked how many we have and what their roles were.

"She seems to have a knack of making sure people are not nervous.

"We were told before the opening that the Queen doesn't like using lifts," Mr Gomez revealed. "She went up the stairs and spoke to the veterans, and we were assuming that she was coming down the stairs, but she was coming down the lift, so we quickly had to move out of the way to let her out!

"Her mother opened the original memorial in 1993, and the Queen made a point of going out on our upstairs terrace area to look at it; I think it was nice for her to see what her mother opened," he added.

VISIT: Meeting veterans at The Wing and visiting Canterbury Cathedral

The Queen has visited Canterbury Cathedral a number of times over the years – and as head of the Church of England that is perhaps not a surprise – but in 2015 she was invited to unveil statues of herself and Prince Philip created to mark her Diamond Jubilee.

Dean of Canterbury Cathedral, the Very Reverend Dr Robert Willis, revealed that, during her visit, the Queen stopped to speak to people who hadn't been briefed, and he gave an insight into the royals' sense of humour.

"I suppose the event began when we were given permission to put the statues in the cathedral, and it was a sense of wanting to have the statues join the others, so I suppose that would have predated the visit by a couple of years.

"We didn't know until just a few months before that the Queen would come with Prince Philip and we thought it was a very historic event to join the whole line of monarchs in the cathedral.

"We had rehearsed what would happen, with lunch at the deanery and then the public service would begin. She would meet the families of the cathedral community, but it did give it an intimacy that gave us a huge amount of excitement.

"It was a huge occasion, and she and Prince Philip connected hugely well with the cathedral family.

"She had visited Canterbury from time to time throughout her reign, so each time she would notice something different, and she has a huge capacity of putting people at their ease and asking questions about them, so you have a natural conversation, and once people are at ease they become happy.

"The West Front of the Cathedral is very weathered but the new stone was very bright, so when the rope pulled away, the Queen said, 'I am sure we will soon tone down'.

"Some of our staff were laughing with Prince Philip. When all the people were standing round, there were busts of the duke's head in various sizes, and he went and stood by them and made people laugh, which relaxed people hugely.

"These visits do give encouragement to places, and afterwards there is the story each person tells to the others, which goes on for days and heartens the community."

But it may be the trips to Mersham the Queen looks forward to the most. Lady Brabourne is the Queen's third cousin and has long been close to the key royal figures.

Widow of acclaimed filmmaker John Brabourne, seventh Baron of Brabourne, she was the daughter of Lord Mountbatten – killed in an IRA terrorist explosion in 1979. She was in the boat which killed her father and also claimed the life of her son Nicholas.

The Mountbattens had always been close to the Windsors - with Prince Charles particularly close to Lord Mountbatten.

For years, the Queen has made visits to Lady Brabourne and, in 1987, attended the marriage of her daughter, Lady Amanda Knatchbull at the church in Ashford before returning to Mersham for the reception.

Everyone in Kent, including us all at Kent on Sunday, wish the Queen a very happy birthday on the occasion of her official 90th celebrations and hope we will be blessed with more visits to come over the years.

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Why we should all raise a glass to her

Tom Gates, chairman of Kent County Council, reflects on the Queen's reign in a special article for Kent on Sunday...

PROUD: Chairman of the county council, Tom Gates

IT is awe-inspiring to think of the level of service Her Majesty has given to our country during the course of her lifetime.

She has seen times of war, suffering, upheaval and great change and throughout these times she has remained a firm and guiding hand; the rock on which the country has been rebuilt and has continued to thrive.

She has represented our nation across the entire globe with grace and good humour.

As our longest-reigning monarch, she has seen Britain change dramatically over the years, but has remained a constant presence in the lives of millions of people in the UK and Commonwealth.

She took on royal duties at an early age, making public appearances on her own as she represented her father, the King and early in the Second World War she did her part to boost public morale, broadcasting to Britain's children.

The lessons she learned during these formative years helped her ensure the royal family remains a symbol of tradition in the 21st century.

Throughout her reign, the Queen has provided continuity and surety, while accepting that the monarchy had to renew itself.

She undertook a 40,000-mile tour of the Commonwealth and said her own "association with the Commonwealth has taught me that the most important contact between nations is usually contact between its peoples".

In 2012 she celebrated her Diamond Jubilee, only the second achieved by a British monarch.

For this celebration she did not travel the world, with her children and grandchildren making trips on her behalf. The Queen chose to tour the UK over several months and her public approval of the monarchy achieved its highest rating since she came to the throne in 1952.

On September 9, 2015, Elizabeth II reached an amazing milestone when she overtook Victoria to become Britain's longest-reigning monarch.

By this point she had been Queen to 12 prime ministers and she has impressed every one of them with her wisdom and a deep understanding of world and UK affairs.

At a meeting of the Kent County Council cabinet last November we discussed how KCC should make a fitting tribute to mark the Queen's 90th birthday and a working group was organised.

Among the items agreed was a cake-baking competition for primary schools in the style of the Great British Bake-Off which has proved a resounding success.

Across the county, Kent libraries have been undertaking a series of themed events.

There are special story times in libraries, along with book displays, craft activities, colouring sheets and the opportunity to design a birthday card.

Several libraries are offering writing competitions and there are a number of royal tea and royal coffee mornings being organised.

Her Majesty is greatly admired both at home and abroad and long may she reign over us.

On behalf of all the members and officers of Kent County Council, I would like to wish you a very happy birthday, Ma'am.

■ If you're attending one of the many street parties taking place this weekend, why not share photographs you've taken with our readers?

We'll feature some of the best in next weekend's edition. Send high-resolution images to editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.

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Probe begins into how teens caught out by rising tides

Rescue teams avert tragedy after helicopter and lifeboats save a group of children left stranded after walk on beach

PARENTS of the group of London teenagers at the centre of a dramatic rescue after being cut off by rising tides near Dover earlier this week have raised £5,000 to thank those who came to their aid.

And the group who organised the trip says a full internal investigation into what went wrong is now under way.

Some 34 schoolchildren became trapped on a beach between St Margaret's Bay and Dover. They had to be rescued by helicopter and lifeboats after using their mobile phones as distress beacons.

The hiking party from the Ahavas Yisroel Community Centre in London, which included two adults, raised the alarm with Kent Police at around 9pm on Monday after becoming disorientated as they followed a coastal path.

The coastguard launched a search by air and sea involving a helicopter based at Lydd, Dover RNLI lifeboat, two Walmer RNLI lifeboats and Langdon coastguard rescue team. Around 40 volunteers joined the "large-scale operation".

UK Coastguard senior maritime operations officer Richard Cockerill said: "The group was advised to switch on their mobile phone lights to help us locate them.

"The group was located by one of the Walmer lifeboats in an area of active cliff falls and also spotted by the helicopter using the forward-looking infra-red camera. All 36 people were recovered to safety by lifeboat and helicopter."

A coastguard spokeswoman said the group were thought to have descended from cliffs on to the beach before becoming trapped by rising water.

When RNLI teams arrived at the scene they found the group had separated and four students were unaccounted for.

A small craft was launched to pick up the pupils in groups as crews searched for the missing teenagers who were found after shouting to rescuers from the rocks.

By the end of the rescue mission, 31 of the walkers were rescued by lifeboat and taken ashore. The remaining five were lifted to safety by helicopter and flown to the Dover Coastguard station.

All were accounted for by 11pm, the coastguard said. The walkers were assessed by the South East Coast Ambulance Service, although none required hospital treatment.

Mark Finnis, coxswain of Dover RNLI, said: "The group were caught out by a rising tide. Thankfully the quick and well co-ordinated search and rescue response meant all 36 casualties were rescued and were lucky to escape without serious injuries, but they've had a traumatic experience."

The Shomrim, the Jewish neighbourhood watch organisation, said several of its volunteers had gone to Dover to assist the group.

Chaim Hochhauser, supervisor at Stamford Hill Shomrim in north London, said: "Volunteers from

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DRAMA: Images taken by rescue teams capture the moment the teens were found stranded on rocks as the tide started rising around them on Monday night

WARNING AS COASTAL DEATHS HIT RECORD HIGH

THE drama in Dover came in the same week coastal fatality figures were released by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) showing the number of deaths along the UK coast reaching a five-year high in 2015, with 168 losing their lives.

Some 11 of those were in Kent - 37 from around the south east.

Around half of the people who die at the coast each year never planned to enter the water. Some 52 per cent did not intend to get wet – people taking part in activities such as coastal walking, running, climbing or angling. In fact, coastal walking and running accounted for over one-fifth (21 per cent) of last year's coastal deaths.

The number of near-fatal incidents was higher still, with the RNLI's UK lifeboat crews and lifeguards saving 385 lives in 2015.

The figures are released as the charity enters the third year of its national drowning prevention campaign, Respect the Water, which aims to halve accidental coastal deaths by 2024.

The campaign is targeted at adult men, who account for most incidents.

Last year saw an increase in the number of men losing their lives at the coast. Between 2011 and 2014 men have accounted for three-quarters (75 per cent) of coastal deaths but, in 2015, this increased to 84 per cent.

The main dangers the RNLI is warning people about while at the coast are cold water, slips and falls, rip currents and waves.

James Millidge, RNLI coastal safety manager, said: ''People need to treat the water with respect – it's powerful and unpredictable. Each year RNLI lifeboat crews and lifeguards save hundreds of lives but, sadly, not everyone can be saved.

''Cold water is a real killer. People often don't realise how cold our seas can be – even in summer months the sea temperature rarely exceeds 12c, which is low enough to trigger cold water shock. If you enter the water suddenly at that temperature, you'll start gasping uncontrollably, which can draw water into your lungs and cause drowning. The coldness also numbs you, leaving you helpless – unable to swim or shout for help.

''The fact that over half of the people who die at the coast each year never planned to enter the water suggests people are also not taking enough care along the coastline itself. We're warning people to stay away from cliff edges, particularly where there is slippery, unstable or uneven ground; stick to marked paths and keep an eye on the water – watch out for unexpected waves which can catch you out and sweep you into the water.''

Stamford Hill Shomrim were called by a group of people stranded near the Dover cliffs as night was falling.

"Several Shomrim volunteers drove down from London to support the group and liaised with parents and families throughout the incident which thankfully ended well, thanks to the great work by RNLI and HM Coastguard."

A spokesman for the Ahavas Yisroel Community Centre said: "We are hugely grateful to the coastguard whose swift actions ensured that everyone was returned to shore safe and well.

"A full internal investigation will be held to ascertain the facts and understand the lessons to be learned."

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Revealed: Just what our coats of arms signify

EMBOYDING a sense of civic pride and identity, coats of arms can be seen on important buildings across Kent, where they form an unbroken link to the traditions of our past, ***writes Simon Allin.***

What's more every Kent town has one which weaves in historic and significant influences to the area – but do you know what yours means?

They originally came into use in the Middle Ages as a way for combatants to identify one another on the battlefield.

In the English and Scottish traditions, an individual, rather than a family, had a coat of arms, and they were passed down from father to son.

Coats of arms typically consist of a heraldic design on an escutcheon, or shield, surrounded by supporters, a crest and a motto. Through the use of symbolic conventions, they were designed to express the characteristics of the bearer.

Over time, disputes over the ownership of coats of arms led to the establishment of heraldic authorities to regulate their use. In England, the College of Arms is responsible for granting arms, and it still imposes strict limitations on their use.

The burgeoning popularity of heraldry led towns, cities and corporations to adopt coats of arms, often with few military associations. The symbols on the arms usually refer to significant historical and geographical links of a town.

With the passing of the age of chivalry, the tradition of heraldry began to decline, until it began to undergo a revival in the 18th and 19th centuries. And rightly so: a close look at their imagery reveals a wealth of detail about our county's history.

Maidstone

Maidstone has one of the most striking coats of arms in the county, with an iguanodon – a type of dinosaur – to the left of the shield. The creature was added in 1949, to commemorate the discovery of iguanodon fossils in the borough in the 19th century.

The wavy horizontal band, or 'fess', on the shield represents the River Medway, which flows through the town, while the red circles, or 'roundels', are derived from the arms of Archbishop Courtenay, who built All Saints Church at the end of the fourteenth century.

To the right of the shield, the lion symbolises England, while the horse's head on the crest refers to the white horse of Kent.

The hops surrounding the horse's neck are the district's traditional produce. Hops were introduced to the area from Flanders at the end of the 15th century, changing the character of English ale, which had previously been flavoured with herbs such as wormwood.

Ashford

Ashford Borough Council's shield is gold, which symbolises the richness and fertility of the Garden of England, while the three sprigs of ash stand for the three former Ashford areas - East Ashford Rural, West Ashford Rural and Ashford Urban.

At the top of the shield, the gold and white lion represents the Cinque Ports, a confederation of coastal towns established in 1155 to provide ships for the Crown in times of need. The town of Tenterden was a member of the confederation, although its river is no longer navigable to large vessels.

The white horse of Kent at the top of the crest holds a leaved hop cone in its mouth, while its hoof rests on the driving wheel of the locomotive Invicta. Built by Newcastle-based Robert Stephenson and Company in 1829 to work on the Canterbury and Whitstable Railway, Invicta was named after the motto of the flag of Kent.

The locomotive sector became an important industry for Ashford after South Eastern Railway's London to Dover line opened between 1842 and 1845, and the company established its works in the town.

Canterbury

Canterbury's coat of arms features a heraldic leopard on a red background, representing the city's links with royalty. Beneath it, three Cornish choughs on a grey background are derived from the coat of arms of Thomas Becket. They represent the historical connections between the city and the saint, who was murdered in 1170 at the behest of Henry II.

The city's motto, Ave Mater Anglia, means 'For Mother England'.

Dover

Naval connections feature strongly in Dover's coat of arms, as the town was one of the Cinque Ports.

The three lions are joined to the rear of a ship, while the blue-and-red shield is based on that of the Cinque Ports and divided into three by waves. The lions previously featured on the Sandwich coat of arms and were incorporated into Dover's heraldry in 1974.

Seahorses stand at either side of the shield, each of which has a naval crown to symbolise the importance of Dover to the defence of England.

Atop the crest sits the white horse of Kent, the hoof of which rests on a tower derived from the crest of Deal.

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Margate

Maritime symbolism abounds on Margate's coat of arms, which features a sea horse supporting the mast of a ship with yard and rigging above the crest. The lion-ship, symbol of the Cinque Ports, appears above the white horse of Kent. The motto, porta maris portus salutis, means 'A gate of the sea and a haven of health.'

Tunbridge Wells

The Tunbridge Wells coat of arms incorporates elements of Cranbrook, Southborough and Tonbridge heraldry. The fountain overlaid with a crown stands for Royal Tunbridge Wells, while the sprig of broom is for Southborough, and the cornucopia, symbolising plenty, represents the agricultural areas added to the towns.

On the left, opposite the white horse of Kent, is a crane, which was previously used by the Cranbrook Rural District. Cranbrook was named after the cranes that lived in the marshes near the town.

The ram's head that sits atop the crest symbolises the old weaving industry that once flourished in the area.

Tonbridge & Malling

The shield features a red crossbar and a blue vertical line, which represent a heraldic T. These elements depict the river Medway flowing under the great bridge at Tonbridge and downstream into the Malling area, which is represented by a black heraldic M.

The Invicta, or Kentish horse, shows that the borough is in Kent, with the horse's neck encircled by a wreath of hops. The horse is mounted on a tower symbolising the ancient abbeys and castles that have made an important historical contribution to the borough.

The motto, forward in unison, expresses the desire of the council for the borough to go forward as an entity and to plan for the future needs of the borough as a whole.

Kent

Kent County Council's coat of arms is notable for its use of the 'white horse rampant', which appears in various forms on the heraldry of the county's towns. The horse is a symbol of the county's Anglo-Saxon origins; specifically, it refers to Horsa, the mythological figure who spearheaded the invasion of Roman Britain in the fifth century.

The white horse, or Saxon steed, is also found on continental heraldry, featuring on the coat of arms of Lower Saxony, the Dutch region of Twente and the modern German state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

The crest shows a mural crown, symbolising the county's many castles, as well as the independent Saxon kingdom of Kent. The sails represent the strong ties of the county with the sea and stand for the navy, the mercantile marine and fisheries.

Kent's maritime history is also represented by the seahorses at either side of the shield. The seahorse to the shield's right bears the arms of the Cinque Ports, while the one to the left bears the arms of the Archbishopric of Canterbury.

The county's motto, 'Invicta', means 'unconquered', and refers to a legendary encounter between William the Conqueror and a band of Kentish men. After ambushing the Duke of Normandy and his soldiers, the men agreed to let him go on condition that he gave then certain privileges and respected their ancient liberties.

Faversham

Faversham's coat of arms is unique – the town is the only one in the UK to use the Royal arms of England, three gold lions on a red background, as its own heraldic emblem.

The lions are derived from the reverse of the former Borough of Faversham's second Common Seal, which is thought to date from the reign of Edward I (1272-1307).

A Latin inscription round the edge of the seal reads 'Since I [Faversham] bear arms for the King without charge, I am a free port'. This suggests that the king granted the town the privilege of using his royal arms in return for services to the Crown.

The privilege reflects the town's status as one of the Cinque Ports, which were granted a high degree of autonomy in return for the provision of ships for the defence of the realm.

Medway

Medway's coat of arms features a four-arched bridge on a blue shield, denoting the four predecessor authorities, Strood, Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham, that merged to form Medway.

Each of the arches symbolises one of the five Medway towns: Strood, Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham and Rainham.

The gold lion reflects the town's royal connections, while the blue background symbolises the River Medway. The naval crown atop the shield represents the historical links between the area and the Royal Navy, while the three forts refer to the defensive structures built during the Napoleonic Wars.

Oak wreaths surrounding the two outer forts symbolise the naval victories associated with the area. The brook on the centre fort comes from the old arms of Gillingham and is a reference to Will Adams, the first Englishman to reach Japan, the first-known Western Samurai and the man who introduced Western shipbuilding techniques to Japan.

The supporters are sea horses holding tridents, which come from the old arms of the Borough of Chatham, while the harps suspended from the horses' collars come from the old arms of the Borough of Gillingham.

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ANTICIPATION is growing for this year's celebration of farming, the countryside and rural living, with huge crowds set to descend on Detling for the Kent County Show – and you could be there for free thanks to our great competition.

Held on July 8, 9 and 10 at the Kent Showground near Maidstone, the event is now in its 87th year.

It brings together the very best of Kent with animals, food, fun and excitement giving a true feel of what The Garden of England has to offer.

Bolddog FMX Stunt Team supported by Lings Motorcycles will be the main ring entertainment for the 2016 show. They have an outstanding team of highly skilled riders and the largest, most sophisticated FMX landing ramp in the world.

The show has introduced additional child friendly entertainment with free pony rides, an interactive area from Tractor Ted, Punch and Judy and the chance to meet Peppa Pig on Saturday and Sunday.

The country, game and canine area will also feature birds of prey, terrier racing, the sheep show, the dog and duck display and the UK Pole Climbing Championships.

For equine lovers, visitors have a chance to see show jumping, equine showing classes, farrier demonstrations, heavy horse turnouts and the fast paced scurry driving competitions.

KENT COUNTY SHOW
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***B**. 87 years*
***C**. 99 years*

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COURT: Judge at the Old Bailey sent Huckle down for a minimum of 25 years on Monday.

Huckle given 22 life terms for shocking child abuse

Having admitted a string of charges against children aged between six months old and 12 years old, an Old Bailey judge sentenced Ashford's Richard Huckle to 22 life sentences for his hideous crimes

By Emily Pennink
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

ONE of Britain's worst paedophiles, who shared horrific images on the dark web as he abused up to 200 Malaysian children, has been handed 22 life sentences.

Freelance photographer Richard Huckle, who attended a grammar school in Folkestone and lived in Ashford, admitted an unprecedented number of offences against children aged between six months and 12 years.

On Monday, Judge Peter Rook QC ordered the 30-year-old to serve a minimum of 25 years in jail to reflect the "public abhorrence" over his "campaign of rape" spanning nine years.

A stream of pictures and videos of his rapes and assaults on children were shared with paedophiles worldwide through the now defunct dark website TLZ – The Love Zone.

He even tried to make a business out of his horrific crimes by crowdfunding the release of the images and was compiling a paedophile's manual at the time of his arrest by the National Crime Agency.

Twenty-three children from poor Christian communities in the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur were identified in 71 charges, although Huckle's tally of abuse which he catalogued on a "Pedopoints ledger" was much higher.

The defendant stood with his hands together as if in prayer as he was sentenced by Judge Rook at the Old Bailey.

The judge told him his "self-delusion knows no bounds" and the 60-page paedophile manual he had written was a "truly evil document".

He said: "You have pleaded guilty to as many as 71 sexual offences. It is very rare indeed that a judge has to sentence sexual offending by one person on such a scale as this.

"You were and are sexually obsessed with children. You have spent years abusing them. In one of your postings you stated that you had become consumed by your paedophilia.

"It is clear from your postings on hidden encrypted paedophile websites on the dark web, and from the manual you were in the process of drafting, that your life revolved around your obsession with your own sexual gratification by child sex abuse.

"It is also clear that, had you not been arrested, you planned to continue the same lifestyle using the expertise that you were keen to show off to, and share with, other abusers so as to continue your sexual exploitation of the children of such communities."

In light of Huckle's refusal to hand over encrypted passwords to hidden files on his computer, the judge added: "In my view, you may well harbour feelings of regret but there is no feeling of genuine remorse in this case."

As Huckle was sent down, a woman in the public gallery shouted out that "1,000 deaths is too good for you".

Huckle first visited Malaysia on a teaching gap year when he was 19 and went on to groom more children posing as a respectable Christian English teacher and philanthropist.

Five of the youngsters were living in a children's home and on one occasion he took a girl out to celebrate her fifth birthday and molested her at his house in Kuala Lumpur.

The defendant, who studied IT at university in Malaysia, was arrested by National Crime Agency officials as he arrived at Gatwick Airport en route to spend Christmas with his family in 2014.

Officers seized Huckle's encrypted laptop and managed to uncover more than 20,000 indecent pictures and videos although there were other files they were unable to crack.

They found Huckle's paedophile manual called Paedophiles And Poverty: Child Lover Guide and a "Pedopoints ledger" in which he awarded himself marks for the abuse of 191 girls and boys.

In online posts, Huckle bragged: "Impoverished kids are definitely much easier to seduce than middle-class Western kids."

Commenting on one of his victims, he boasted: "I'd hit the jackpot, a 3yo girl as loyal to me as my dog and nobody seemed to care."

Huckle crowd-funded the release of indecent images of the three-year-old girl in exchange for Bitcoins, achieving 105 per cent of his target.

His parents were so horrified when he confessed his crimes that they begged police to take him away and made statements to support his prosecution, the court heard.

Ahead of his sentencing, Huckle claimed to a psychiatrist that he wanted to put his "madness" behind him and settle down with a south Indian woman.

But the court was shown a posting from 2013 in which he outlined his plan to marry one of his victims in order to help him abuse more children.

In a message to TMZ's 7,000 users, he described how he had "fallen in love" with South Asia and its "adorable kids".

He wrote: "I have gotten particularly close with one family whom I have known about six years.

"I have sexual contact with four of the girls in that family and, though the family obviously does not approve it, they try to work around it as they know I can be a potentially valuable asset to them in future."

On planning to marry one of the girls when she turns 18, he wrote: "I feel my situation could strongly benefit me in that my partner is still quite young and I have known her since she was seven and I can influence her young mind to mould her into the perfect wife.

"My ambition once married would be for our family to be like foster carers for children, temporary or long term."

Judge Rook concluded that Huckle posed a "substantial risk for an indefinite period".

James Traynor, from the NCA's Child Exploitation and Online Protection (Ceop) command, said "Richard Huckle spent several years integrating himself into the community in which he lived, making himself a trusted figure. But he abused that trust in the worst possible way.

"He deliberately travelled to a part of the world where he thought he could abuse vulnerable children without being caught. Borders are no barrier – we are determined that those who go abroad to abuse children will be held to account."

An NSPCC spokesman said: "Huckle is a frighteningly depraved paedophile, who bragged about raping babies and delighted in abusing infants who trusted him. He left a trail of devastation and his sentence reflects the severity of his crimes which have shattered so many young lives.

"It is horrifying that Huckle was able to profit from this appalling abuse by using the web to sell images and even films to other paedophiles; emphasising the importance, yet again, of the need for a cohesive, global effort from both the authorities and internet services providers to combat this vile trade."

Art of the tattoo delivers top marks at ink showcase event

An image of the notorious Kray twins helped deliver glory for local ink artist

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A TATTOO artist has scored highly in a top national award, for a striking work depicting notorious Kray twins Ronnie and Reggie on the arm and shoulder of a customer.

Alex Crook, from Sittingbourne, was runner-up in the Best of British category at the Great British Tattoo Show at London's Alexandra Palace.

STAR: Tattoo of Angelina Jolie

The remarkable Krays tattoo was created for customer Alfie Puxley to match his other arm which has American gangsters, including Al Capone.

Mr Crook, 32, said: "He is a fan of gangsters, so the Krays was an obvious choice.

"I am going to re-do some of his American arm as that can be improved. I didn't originally so that one, so am just topping up the quality a little."

Mr Crook, who runs The Alex Crook Studio, said: "The Kray tattoo took 14 hours over two days and was all done at the convention in front of the judges."

The tattoo artist admits he has fine-tuned his artistic talents by practising on a grapefruit - the nearest thing to a human skin he can find.

Mr Crook started his skin art career at the age of 23 in a chance meeting with a former girlfriend's sister.

He had a quick go on her inking machine and was hooked. He got his first tattoo then.

TEAM: Alex Crook, far right, and his team at his successful tattoo studios in Sittingbourne celebrating after his remarkable work on customer Alfie Puxley (right) in front of the judges saw him named runner up

He said: "I have had a 25 year passion for pencil drawing and now it has turned my art in to an award winner.

"I started drawing at the age of five, and constantly practised and developed my style after taking inspiration and feedback from other talented artists I admired."

Mr Crook found the application to be more natural than anticipated and again spent many hours practising honing his new found skills.

He said: "Many grapefruit met their end as I practised and practised on the closest thing I could find to human skin.

"Family and friends then encouraged him to practice on them and my style, confidence and ability flourished.

"Having gained the confidence required, I applied and was given positions at two studios in Kent.

ART: Remarkable example of images by Alex Crook

"My sole objective was to be the best I could be at my art.

"I was still running my own business as a driving instructor, but continued to travel in between lessons to studios when clients specifically requested my work."

After working for these studios to gain the experience needed and perfect his art, Mr Crook was given the opportunity to set up his own.

The idea was to set up a private studio where he was free to concentrate on his art while the business side was handled by a partner.

He said: "We approached Swale Borough Council to seek advice on setting up the studio. The council was very encouraging and supportive in getting the fledging business off the ground.

"The business then used social media to gain recognition for my tattoos and slowly my work was becoming better recognised.

"A loyal client base was being established while my reputation grew through word of mouth. Clients were able to view finished tattoos and video of my creations and my following on social media quickly hit 800."

He said the business attempted to offer a different experience to a normal high street studio.

OPTIONS: Some of the most ambitious designs can take days to finally complete

Clients are able to book appointments during the evening to discuss potential work on a by-appointment only service.

"This proved a success as clients preferred to meet and discuss their potential work prior to arriving on the day of their tattoo," he said.

"Recognition for my work continued to grow and the original building had to be replaced with a purpose-built studio twice the size.

"This gave the opportunity for clients to visit a professional environment in a relaxed atmosphere.

"The business has now been running for three years and has proved an outstanding success due to the quality of the art I produce."

During his time as an artist, Mr Crook has been asked to tattoo various subject and different parts of the body.

He has also tattooed himself as he said "every good tattooist needs to know how it feels".

He said this allowed him to put himself in the client's shoes and also establish the differing techniques to gain the desired effect.

Now in his fifth year of tattooing, he is grateful his art has been recognised to the extent it has and is encouraged to perfect his art even more to make sure the clients keep returning and recommending him.

He said: "There are always talented artists coming into the industry every day that you have to try and stay one step ahead of.

"I am not complacent about how hard I have to work but at the same time I am enjoying making sure the art speaks for itself in terms of quality."

Among those designs he has worked on in the past include tattooing the handprints of a customer's children onto his arm, fish for the anglers among his clients, a host of famous faces and pets - both living and dead as memorial pieces.

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Classic car show drives big queue

The Bromley Pageant of Motoring was blessed with a host of fine vehicles and some great weather but organisers admit it was a victim of its own success with many visitors caught up traffic jams

By Simon Allin
simon.allin@archant.co.uk

MOTORING enthusiasts revved up their hobby last weekend, with hundreds attending the Bromley Pageant of Motoring – although, ironically, its success led to many spending more time in their cars than they expected.

Traffic jams built up along the A21 as a result of its popularity, with organisers vowing to improve things for next year.

The bright summer's day was the ideal weather in which to enjoy events such as the Best of British display, the UK's top mountain bike stunt team and exhibitions of vehicles of all shapes and sizes.

British racing legend Derek Bell, a five-time Le Mans winner, joined the pageant to chat about his life in motoring and held meet and greet sessions with fans.

Former Top Gear presenter Sue Baker was also on hand to host several question and answer sessions throughout the day.

Phil Weedon, managing director of event organisers Kelsey Media, said: "The variety and the quality of cars on show are always of a high standard.

"As a car enthusiast, it was great seeing ex-Top Gear presenter Sue Baker interviewing Derek Bell.

"I went to a Q and A session and sat down like an avid car fan and watched them discussing Derek's successes.

"She was also questioned about her time on Top Gear and her thoughts on the current Top Gear format."

Kelsey Media had taken over the running of the pageant for this year's event, and Mr Weedon described it as a 'learning year'.

He admitted the sunny weather had caused some traffic problems in the area, particularly along the A21.

"We know there are traffic problems and we know there are things we can do to alleviate them for next year," he added.

FLAGS: The best of British were on show at the event

BRIGHT: Colourful vehicles proved a hit at Norman Park with big crowds flocking for the fun last weekend

FAST: Lovers of classic sport models were not left disappointed. All pictures: Keith Larby/AK Photos

HEADCORN'S TREATS THIS WEEKEND

MERLINS and Motorbikes takes place at Headcorn Aerodrome this weekend and features a host of classic motorbikes and aerial displays.

Organised by the British Motorcycle Federation (BMF) and Aero Bikesure, it runs on Saturday and Sunday.

Aside from a wide range of two-wheeled mean machines, there will be an aerial display from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF).

Two Spitfires will be taking to the air as well as 'the great British bike off' – a 1,200-metre drag race between a Vincent Black Shadow and the Aero Legends Spitfire TD314 MK IX.

There will be a chance to meet special guest Tom Ward from BSB Superstock 600.

Jim Freeman, chairman of the BMF, said: "We're delighted to launch this event, which is set to attract thousands of visitors over the weekend.

"The mix of classic motorcycles and vintage aircraft, combined with numerous other attractions, makes this a special event in the calendar.

"What could be more evocative than the lazy, effortless, thunder of a Merlin-engined Spitfire over Kent?"

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HIT: The musical has played to millions, while the movie version pulled in more than £400m in box office takings

Mamma Mia! Look what's coming for long run in 2017

Get your dancing shoes on next July as Abba inspired show heads to the county

WEST End smash hit Mamma Mia! is coming to Kent after confirming a string of shows at Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre for next year.

The hugely successful show, based on the movie musical of the same name, will run at the theatre from July 11-29, 2017.

Tickets go on sale to the general public on June 28.

It is the first UK tour for the show which has packed in audiences around the world.

Mamma Mia! is Judy Craymer's ingenious vision of staging the story-telling magic of Abba's timeless songs with a tale of family and friendship unfolding on a Greek island paradise.

To date, it has been seen by more than 60 million people in 50 productions in 16 different languages.

Mamma Mia! The Movie is the highest worldwide grossing live-action musical film of all time.

The London production of Mamma Mia! has now been seen by more than 10 per cent of the entire UK population and is one of only five musicals to have run for more than 10 years both on Broadway and in the West End. In 2011, it became the first Western musical ever to be staged in Mandarin in China.

With music and lyrics by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus, Mamma Mia! is written by Catherine Johnson, directed by Phyllida Lloyd and choreographed by Anthony Van Laast.

It includes a whole host of the Swedish four piece's biggest hits, including the likes of Super Trouper, Lay All Your Love on Me, Dancing Queen, Knowing Me, Knowing You, Take a Chance on Me, Thank You for the Music, Money, Money, Money, The Winner Takes It All, Voulez-Vous and SOS.

Over 60 million people have seen the show, which has grossed £1.5 billion worldwide

It follows the story of how, on the eve of her wedding, a daughter's quest to discover the identity of her father brings three men from her mother's past back to the island they last visited 20 years ago.

Using some of Abba's biggest hits, it propels this hugely entertaining tale of love, laughter and friendship to playing in front of sell-out audiences.

Creator and producer Judy Craymer said: "We are absolutely delighted to be bringing Mamma Mia! to Canterbury for the first time with the UK Tour. Mamma Mia! is fun for all the family with its heart-warming story and the irresistible songs of ABBA. We can't wait to share the fun with Canterbury."

The musical, which started its run in 1999, was the inspiration for the 2008 movie starring Meryl Streep, Piers Brosnan and Colin Firth.

Despite some mixed critical reviews it went on to earn a staggering £421 million.

Casting is to be announced.

Tickets range in price from £29 to £59.50. Available from the box office on 01227 787787, or marlowetheatre.com.

The show will be captioned for the 2.30pm performance on July 15, British Sign Language–interpreted at 7.30pm on July20, and audio described at 2.30pm on July 22.

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Women Seeking

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PAT, petite blonde lady, GSOH, young looking for her age, seeks genuine gent any age with GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422393**

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+ Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3002 Box 419673**

RITA, , seeks a genuine male for friendship, days out, shes very friendly, genuine and social, give her a call ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422403**

KIM, 32yrs, attractive blonde lady seeks discreet gent for daytime distractions. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3006 Box 421657**

MERRY, widow, dark hair, kind and caring, hoping to meet a kind gent for friendship, possibly more. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422339**

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. **Tel: No: 0906 515 3010 Box: 409715**

BARBARA, is a caring lady who seeks a man to care for, she will do anything to make you happy. Just give her a call today. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422411**

LUCY first time advertiser, 32yrs, tall slim blonde airline worker, seeks discreet gent, any status for casual fling. Looks/age unimportant. **Tel: 0906 515 3026 Box: 420237**

50YRS, old attractive lady. Sheila, caring honest, seeks discreet gent. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422469**

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. **Tel: 0906 515 3018 Box: 413399**

GENUINE, GSH, attractive, outgoing professional female, 55. Enjoys keeping fit, socialising and travel, WLTM similar male for relationship. **Text only Mailbox: 5453851**

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3022 Box 421375**

MATURE lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTM similar aged gentleman with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421427**

WENDY, mature, passionate ladylike divorcee seeks no strings casual friendship/fun with gent any age. **Tel: 0906 515 3034 Box 421605**

JO, mature understanding worldly Essex lady, seeks generous gent for regular fetish fantasy role-play, discretion assured. **Text only Mailbox: 5320299**

MARION, early 70s, young at heart, GSOH, active, likes walking, gardening, meals out, travel, theatre and animals, looking for male friendship to share interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419657**

FEMALE, blue eyes, slim and pretty, from South Africa, young fifties, seeking a sincere, retired gentleman, who resides close to the sea. **Text only Mailbox: 5456242**

SINGLE late 60s female, n/s, GSOH, likes going out and being active, not fun on my own, seeking single male, 66-70, n/s, with GSOH, to share each others interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421433**

MATURE lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTM similar aged gentleman with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421429**

ORIENTAL lady, honest, caring, loves walking, WLTM a reliable, sincere man for LTR. **Text only Mailbox: 5443434**

FEMALE, young 58, 5ft2, size 14, blonde, bubbly, GSOH, warm, loving, kind and caring, loves music, animals, seaside, looking for that special someone. **Text only Mailbox: 4715158**

GENUINE single female 49, seeking good-natured, intelligent, polite, single male for friendship/relationship. **Text only to Mailbox: 4198603**

KIND, caring lady of African origin, living in UK for past 20 years, looking for a gentleman who is kind and caring, must have a GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421041**

ANGELA, 53, African origin, looking for a kind, genuine, caring gentleman, 60 years +. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421039**

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SINGLE slim female, 68, n/s, GSOH, likes cooking, walking etc, seeks male, single, slim 65-70, n/s, with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420091**

SLIM female GSOH, 5'3, Likes walking, pub lunches, days out, looking for soul mate, smart appearance, similar interests N/S GSOH, easy going. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4762600**

KIND lady, 50s, been broken hearted, seeks kind, genuine man for caring relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419889**

CHANTELLE, 5ft3 light brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, like nights in/out, walks, animals, romance seeks honest guy. Littlehampton. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4923883**

MARIE, very lonely middle-aged woman, looking for a kind hearted older man, late 70s/early 80s for friendship/companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418955**

RACHEL late 40s, blonde, blue eyes and very voluptuous. Looking for a kind, caring honest man. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418741**

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busty brunette seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418117**

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243**

FEMALE, 59, GSOH, many interests, seeks caring male for fun friendship maybe more, genuine calls only. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4819793**

GORGEOUS flower, Ashford Kent, 51, larger lady, large personality, easy going, seeks male who likes dogs, animals for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417435**

FEMALE easy going, kind, loving, genuine, romantic, car boots, gardening, seeking male with GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417603**

Men Seeking

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PHILLIP, 66, into farming and country life, looking for a loyal, genuine lady, someone I can trust, to go on holidays with and spend time together. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422699**

BEN, kind caring gent, 37yrs, very tall and well built with curly black hair. Own home, good job, just missing a special lady. **Text Only Box: 4158248**

TONY, early 60s, 6ft, slim, fit, easy going, looking for no strings fun with a lady, age unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422643**

LIVELY old boy, OHAC, near sea in Folkestone, into red wine, garlic and Radio 3, seeks lady companion/lover, 58-68. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422621**

HANDSOME male, mid 40s, dark hair, hazel eyes, wishes to meet appropriate female for fun, friendship and perhaps more, please get in touch if interested. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422587**

LOCAL Sevenoaks man, seeks local lady for fun and friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417127**

PAUL 52, seeks loving female for exciting times, meals out, weekends away, cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418077**

CHRIS, from Folkestone, 71, 5ft9, widower, green eyes, lonely, n/s, OHAC, likes gardening, the coast, pubs, dining out, holidays, cruises, days out, WLTM similar lady to share interests, can travel. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422375**

PAT, 68, young at heart, slim, proud 4' 11" GSOH, N/S, likes walking etc Whistable area, seeks similar slim easy going male 60-70. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081**

SUSIE fit, friendly, looking for someone to love and look after me, preferably, older, N/S male with own car. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392537**

HAPPY young looking lady, 62, likes socialising, conversation, seeking nice man to share good times with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407383**

KATIE, 5ft 5, slim dark hair, very attractive female, likes most things in life and a good laugh, looking for a similar male. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4722127**

BLACK lady 43, sincere, down to earth, fun loving, likes theatre, cinema, meals out, walks, seeking white gent with GSOH, sincere and down to earth. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415477**

MALE, 54, shyish, looking for fun times with a lady, 60-70, with GSOH, status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422431**

PAUL 49 5ft 8ins likes eating/nights in/out seeks loving female for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404013**

PROFESSIONAL, romantic male, 44, likes meals out, cinema, music, holidays, seeks female, 30-55 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 250195**

PAUL GSOH, 5ft 8ins, medium build, seeking Miss Right for LTR to put the spark back into life. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 391970**

MIKE, 64, outgoing person, enjoys life, likes sport, cricket, nice meals out, holidays, WLTM someone to share interests and quality time. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422329**

COLIN, 56, 6ft, medium build, clean and tidy with a tidy beard, I'm after some TLC with no strings adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422359**

HARLOW male, 40, kind, attractive, happy, considerate looking to meet slim female for LTR, children welcome. **Text only Mailbox: 5468389**

FRIENDLY passionate male, 55, 6ft, medium build, clean, discreet, lots of TLC to offer, seeks female for fun times. Canterbury **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381222**

OUTGOING male, seeking attractive female, likes sports, music, cinema and nights out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414793**

PAUL 48, 5ft 8ins, GSOH, likes music, cinema, seeks female for fun, friendship and LTR. Tunbridge Wells. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 371985**

MALE, 58, very outgoing, looking for attractive female, slim to medium build, for adult fun and maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421883**

SLIM, 5ft 6 white male WLTM 18 to 42 year old lady for friendship. **Text only Mailbox: 5441709**

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RETIRED, smart, 68 year old, 5ft5, I enjoy eating out, walking, holidays and golf, WLTM a slim, attractive lady, 60-68, for a loving, tender relationship, to enjoy these times with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421853**

MALE, 55 looking for mature lady for outings and adult fun, easy going, GSOH, nice looking and a bit shy. **Text only Mailbox: 4922399**

YOUNG 50s male looking for discreet daytime kisses and cuddles with nice female. Kent and Sussex. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421601**

FEMININE sensual female, slim-medium build wanted by slim, kind male for daytime meets, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414809**

JIM 45, slim 5'8, blue eyes, short brown hair, very fit, would like to meet older lady for regular N S A fun. East Sussex. **Text only Mailbox: 4529089**

NEIL, Looking to meet lady for fun, possible LTR with someone special, accom and travel w/Sussex, age/looks unimportant. **Text only Mailbox: 4435323**

WIDOWER 67, N/S, likes real ale, country music, gardening, DIY, seeks N/S female for lots of TLC. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381143**

CHRIS widower, likes DIY, gardening, nights out, rock and roll, N/S, looking for LTR with female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410191**

MALE, 6ft, slim, 67, divorced, retired, likes social drinks, meals out, nights in and all other, WLTM lady with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421351**

MATURE cross dressing guy, seeking lady willing to apply a full make over and give a manicure and pedicure. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421341**

KEN 61, 6ft, slim, likes socialising, drinking, animals, countryside, seaside, meals out, seeks similar lady. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 333017**

SHY male seeks confident, strong willed lady, to take the lead for mutual fun, looks/age unimportant. ACA **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421223**

MALE, 50, 6ft 4ins, well built, divorced gent, looking to date calm and kind lovely lady. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421195**

MALE, 54, looking for discreet lady, 60-70, for adult fun and a special friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421085**

BARRY, 50, 6ft, well built, seeks lovely lady for good times, loving and enjoying life. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421047**

DAVE 64 solvent, working, not bad looking, would like to meet slim, fun to be with female, 50 to 60, to get to know. Chelmsford area. **Text only to Mailbox: 4368820**

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MALE 38, good-looking, GSOH, seeks lady, 35-55 for laughter and lots of fun. Kent/Sussex. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 369301**

CALM, kind and good company, male seeking a lovely lady for good times and fun and loving. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419733**

MATTHEW, five foot eleven, looking for a mature lady for discreet friendship and a few laughs. Dartford area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419469**

PROFESSIONAL gentleman, just retired, own house, likes holidays, reading, cinema, WLTM similar professional lady. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420767**

MALE, 60, medium build, gosh, seeks attractive female, under 50, for no strings, discreet, daytime fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420621**

CLINT, 37, kind, caring, honest and WLTM someone of any age who is similar and looking for a relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419951**

HEALTHY 61yr old male, N/S, medium build, likes France, cooking, gardening, seeks female, 50-60 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 286360**

Gay Seeking

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EASY going, friendly guy, slim, n/s, likes the outdoors, gardening, cinema, theatre, music, WLTM a nice guy, 50-60s. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422741**

Peter, bi male, aged 68, inexperienced seeks bi male for fun and friendship. **Text only Mailbox: 5459879**

MALE medium build, likes outdoors, DIY, seeking slim, N/S guy for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403267**

MATURE bi male seeks similar for fun and friendship. **Text only Mailbox: 4641909**

EASYGOING guy, 62, likes outdoors, countryside, walks, seeks slim, N/S quiet guy for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 333477**

ALAN, 68, straight acting gay man, kind, caring with GSOH, likes sport, art and going on holidays, looking for another gay man. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421529**

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Alexandra has the X Factor for lead role in all-new Sister Act

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

CASTING for the later incarnation of the eagerly anticipated musical Sister Act – directed and choreographed by Strictly Come Dancing judge Craig Revel Horwood – has been confirmed.

And X Factor winner Alexandra Burke will be the star as Deloris Van Cartier – continuing a successful run in touring productions which also recently saw her star in the successful stage version of The Bodyguard.

Sister Act, which is based on the 1992 movie featuring Whoopi Goldberg, is expected to play to packed houses when it arrives in Dartford in January 2017 and Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre next June.

The all new production, put on by Curve, also sees Joanna Francis as Michelle, Jon Robyns as Eddie, Karen Mann as Mother Superior and Rosemary Ashe as Sister Mary Lazarus.

Alexandra Burke will perform at all evening performances. At the matinee performances, the role of Deloris Van Cartier will be played by Joanna Francis.

Aaron Lee Lambert will play Curtis, Sarah Goggin Sister Mary Robert, Susannah Van Den Berg Sister Mary Patrick, Allison Harding Sister Mary Theresa, Ricky Rojas Pablo, Samuel Morgan-Grahame as Joey and Sandy Grigelis as TJ.

The company also includes Nicola Bryan, Jennifer Douglas, Aiesha Pease, Sally Peerless and Justin Wilman.

Ms Burke shot to fame after winning the fifth series of The X Factor. Her debut number one single Hallelujah sold over one million copies in the UK, a first for a British female soloist.

Sister Act tells the story of Deloris Van Cartier, a disco diva whose life takes a surprising turn when she witnesses a murder.

Under protective custody she is hidden in the one place she won't be found – a convent. Disguised as a nun and under the suspicious watch of Mother Superior, Deloris helps her fellow sisters find their voices as she unexpectedly rediscovers her own.

The show will be at Dartford's Orchard Theatre from January 2-7 and at Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre from June 26 to July 1, 2017.

STAR: Alexandra Burke will front the musical which heads into Kent next year

Omid books 2017 tour date

COMEDIAN and actor Omid Djalili is heading back into Kent next year.

He will be performing at Margate's Winter Gardens on April 2. He plays Canterbury in December.

Nine Below Zero at centre

LONG-running rock and blues band Nine Below Zero have confirmed a live date in Whitstable later this year.

The band will be performing at the Horsebridge Centre on October 29. Tickets are on sale now, priced £16 direct from the popular seaside venue.

Vue gets Bowie release

A DOCUMENTARY film of the ground-breaking exhibition David Bowie Is, created by the Victoria and Albert Museum, London in 2013, is being re-released in Vue cinemas next month.

Artists head to Stables

SEVEN local artists, including Ann Hale from Dartford, will be exhibiting in Bexley throughout July.

The retired artist will see her work at The Stables Gallery in Hall Place from July 2-30. Admission and parking is free.

More than 100 works will be on show.

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I shall say this only once...

A BALLET which blends comedy Allo Allo into its work is heading to Sittingbourne's Avenue Theatre on June 25.

It forms part of neo classical ballet company JSLN Dance's Variations of Pointe show..

Jukebox musical in demand

TICKETS are selling fast for the Save The Last Dance For Me musical when it swings into Tunbridge Wells next month.

The show, penned by the acclaimed script writers Laurence Marks and Maurice Gran, runs at the Assembly Hall Theatre between July 4-9 and stars Antony Costa from Blue.

Joly's Queen's got talent

A MINIATURE artwork by Nic Joly celebrating the Queen's 90th goes on show at Castle Galleries in Bluewater from Monday. British artist Nic Joly's Britain's Got Talent features the monarch and a corgi.

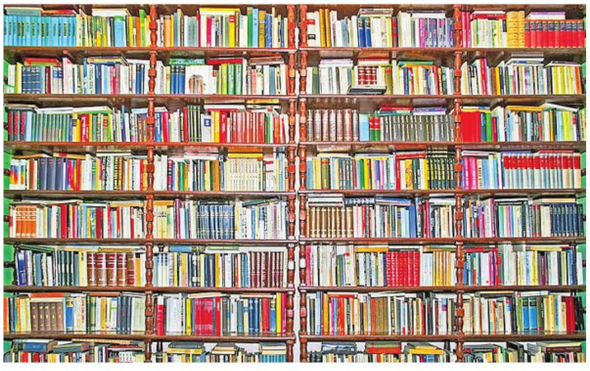
Pub date for the folk club

TENTERDEN Folk Club meets on Tuesday, June 14, at the William Caxton pub at 8pm.

Everyone is welcome to go along, sing, play, tell a story or just sit and listen. The venue is one frequently used during the Tenterden Folk Festival. Those attending should gather in time for the club to start at 8.30pm.

Book festival doubles in size for seaside return

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk



A MAJOR book festival in Margate is returning and doubling in size for its return this year with a line-up featuring a host of best-sellers.

The Margate Bookie Litfest will run from August 20-21 in the seaside town with authors lining up alongside workshops and storytelling sessions for children.

Highlights include Emmy-winning comedy writer David Quantick, former chair of the Royal Literary Society Maggie Gee and Margate-born poet Salena Godden.

Events take place at venues across Margate, including the glamorous Sands Hotel and the trendy Resort Studios.

Jay Rayner delivers his Ten Food Commandments explaining, amongst other things, why thou shalt always eat with thy hands and worship the humble pig.

Author of Stasi Child, David Young, will share videos of real-life escapes and never-seen-before pictures of the locations that inspired him to write the chilling Cold War thriller.

Thanet-born Sophia Tobin, whose novel The Widow's Confession is set in 1850s Broadstairs also attends.

Author of 12 novels, Maggie Gee, will open the Literary Lounge. Jude Cook and Samantha Ellis will be joined by the likes of debut novelist Emma Claire Sweeney and Amy Sackville, who teaches creative writing at the University of Kent.

Screenwriter and author Paul Dornan, is leading a masterclass on comic writing. His special guest is Simon Nye, who wrote Men Behaving Badly.

Andreas Loizou, founder of the Margate Bookie said: "I always knew a litfest in England's coolest town would be a winner, but I've been knocked out by the amazing feedback from our audience. Many of our authors and publishers fell in love with Margate last year and have already booked to join us again this time."

Tickets are available now. See www.margatebookie.com.

VENUE: Margate will host

TASTY: Foodie Jay Rayner

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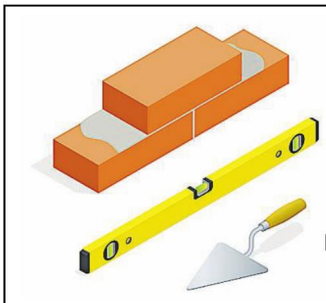

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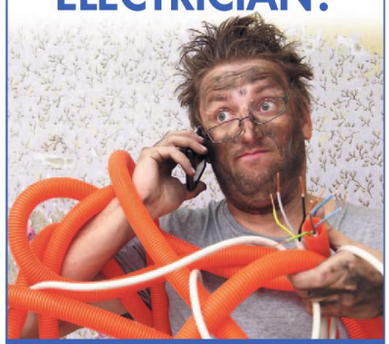

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Prisoners grow with green fingered experience

Pioneering project to get those behind bars focusing on growing and tending gardens is proving a hit

FOR some time now we've all known that gardening is among the best pastimes for both physical and mental wellbeing - but it's also being used to help rehabilitate prisoners and give them hope for the future.

We've seen prisoners help construct gardens at major horticultural shows – prisoners from Leyhill won a gold medal at the Chelsea Flower Show one year – while HMP Whatton in Nottinghamshire recently won the RHS-backed Windlesham Trophy Competition for the seventh time for the best-kept prison garden in England and Wales.

Another prison that is making full use of horticulture is HMP Send, a women's prison in Surrey which, thanks to The Clink Charity, is helping rehabilitate prisoners through growing fruit, vegetables and flowers and backing up that work with recognised horticultural qualifications.

Many of the 282 inmates are serving life or very long sentences. Up to 20 women train in the garden on a daily basis, 15 of whom are studying for a City & Guilds NVQ (level 2) in horticulture.

Those chosen for the garden project are trusted prisoners who are nearing the end of their sentence, although there's one lifer on the current scheme who is learning to drive the on-site tractor and helps oversee the gardening novices.

The 4.5-acre garden complex features 11 polytunnels and a glasshouse where prisoners tend everything from basil and French beans to Florence fennel, three varieties of tomatoes – pomodoro, marmande and Pink Charmer – blueberries, borage and butternut squash.

GROWTH: Polytunnels at HMP Send in Surrey

Some 300 eggs are laid weekly by the 45 Rhode Island Red chickens, many of which are sent to The Clink restaurants at nearby HMP High Down and Brixton prisons.

In the classroom, the inmates will learn the theory of good garden practice by vocational trainers before being sent to work.

Prison governor Carlene Dixon says: "It gives them focus, normality, something to keep them busy and a sense of self worth."

The prison also has links with industry and helps them, with support from The Clink, when they are released.

"The great benefit is to give them back their social skills. They are working an eight-hour day as part of a team. They are gaining confidence and are proud of what they do. Their identity might initially have been their crime or sentence. That can change with their achievements," she says.

So far, five prisoners have been released after completing the Send garden project. None has re-offended. But the project only started in 2014 and official figures won't be available for another 12 months - so watch this space.

■ For more information, visit www.theclinkcharity.org

Great Comp is ready

THE keenly anticipated Great Comp Music Festival season begins next month, with a string of concerts taking place between July through to October.

The annual event begins on July 3 with an evening concert every weekend in July and then again from September 3 to October 2.

It is held in a converted barn auditorium in the gardens of 17th-century manor house Great Comp in Platt, near Sevenoaks.

Hologram war on stage

THE world's first fully holographic theatre show heads to Gravesend's Woodville Theatre on June 16, harnessing the latest technology to focus on the human tragedy of the First World War.

Adam Donen's Symphony to a Lost Generation features some 250 actors and dancers beside the world-renowned Vienna Philharmonic Choir and Lithuanian State Orchestra.

Fete set for S Club Party

S CLUB Party and Big Brovas are two of the big names performing at the Stone Fete this summer – a free event expect to pull in thousands of visitors.

They will be joined by trio Booty Luv at Stone Recreation Ground on July 3.

The fete runs from noon to 6pm in Stone, near Dartford. In addition, there will be more than 60 stalls and a £5 ride-all-day wristband available.

Judith Weir at festival

SIMON Langton Grammar School for Boys presents The Langton Festival of Music and Health running from July 4-6.

There will be guest speakers, workshops and a host of 'world class' musicians performing including James Rhodes, Simon Lepper, Trevor Pinnock and Mark Padmore.

Current Mast of the Queen's Music, Judith Weir, will also be attending, delivering a composition masterclass.

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With full garden furniture sets from £64.95 and 7 day a week customer services, it no wonder our customers are coming back again and again!

It's time to get in style this summer. With a wide range of modern furniture sets & accessories in stock right now.

The stylish grey Rattan corner sofa set is great for lots of people to enjoy or just for you to lounge on, comes with a handy matching table.

If your not one for sharing, check out our new Rattan Multi lounger, put your feet up or just lay flat and snooze.

If you want to add some colour then the vibrant Lime Green 6 Piece Furniture Set (£119.99) is ideal or for total relaxation go online & check out the Gravity Reclining Sun Lounger, modern and comfortable and easily manoeuvrable, folds up to save space.

With furniture sets to seat from two to six people, be it Wooden, Rattan or Metal & Glass there is something to suit almost everyone.

After watering your garden with one or our many different type of hoses and other accessories you may want to have something which is more relaxing. We have the new Love Seat Rocker, a traditional seating style with the addition of rocking back and forth. Maybe You want to relax with the family on a swinging hammock or enjoy watching the children play with the picnic table that is also a sand pit and when they're tied they can also relax with our Children's loungers complete with side table and parasol.

Garden Living

Making the most of the sun and being in your garden this summer?

Whether you are looking to entertain or relax there are lots of ideas on our website so that you can enjoy yourselves.

We have multi-purpose fire pits from £26.99 (not pictured here) that help keep you warm when the nights get chilly but also double as a BBQ.

To stop the rain spoiling your day, why not take a look at our shelters and gazebos to protect your food and beer from getting wet!

Make getting your garden ready to show off easier and alleviate your aches and pains with our range of telescopic hand tools. We also have power tools and regular hand tools to help you create that perfect look.

What else does your garden need to look good? Ornaments like the Garden planter with clock and thermometer (£29.95) are a great addition and would also make a great present for any fan of gardening.

Please look at the website to see our other garden décor.

After the work is done and it's time to relax, the banana parasol (available in green terracotta or cream) offers shade from the rays, as do our other parasols starting from only £11.99. Keep things looking stylish with a parasol base, all of which are perfect whether your relaxing in the pool or chilling out on a recliner with a glass of wine.

Unit M, Forge Meadow, 9 Canterbury Road, Hawkinge, Folkestone, Kent, CT18 7JA

We are delighted to announce the launch of the Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards 2016

Headline Sponsor

ALARIS

NOMINATIONS are now being invited for the 2016 Kent Life and Kent onSunday Food & Drink Awards. The awards dinner will take place at Ashford International Hotel on October 17 from 6.30pm to midnight.

The prestigious awards, which launched in 2013, are designed to champion, highlight and offer a showcase to the great and the good of the region's food and drink industry, including local producers and suppliers, small farming businesses, chefs, restaurants, pubs, cafes and hoteliers.

All will be people who care about the countryside and the future of our local environment.

The companies included will all be nominated by you, our Kent Life and Kent on Sunday readers.

We want to know if you've enjoyed a fantastic meal at your local pub or have been impressed by the produce and service at your neighbourhood farmers' market or farm shop.

The nomination form is available here and will be repeated. It is also available to complete online at kentfda.co.uk, where you can read more about the awards and see pictures of last year's winners.

Entries close on August 7. Our handpicked panel of high-profile judges who all live or work in Kent will then select a shortlist, starting the independent judging process where finalists will be visited or interviewed to determine a worthy winner in each category.

All finalists will be invited to the prestigious awards ceremony, where they will enjoy a reception and three-course meal with wine before finding out if they are a winner.

This is our fourth Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards and we are immensely proud to be able to offer you once again the opportunity to reward and recognise the deserving businesses within our local food and drink industry that go above and beyond expectations.

These awards are what you make of them so if you are the owner of a restaurant, a chef or local producer then spread the word among your clients, customers and visitors.

It takes no time at all to make your nomination. You can email, post or nominate online.

We are looking for quality over quantity, focusing on good comments rather than simply the number of nominations received, so everybody is in with a chance no matter how big or small their business.

■ **Don't forget to let us know when you have made your recommendation on our Twitter page @kentlife and @KOSMedia by using #kentfda – similarly, if you are looking for nominations, please use this hashtag**

Kent Life and *Kent on Sunday* Food & Drink Awards 2016 Nomination Form

Nominate your Kent food and drink favourites by using this form or email us at **kentfda@archant.co.uk**

Please post your entry form to:
Food & Drink Awards 2016.
Archant Kent,
Kent House, 81 Station Road,
Ashford TN23 1PP

Or you can email us at:
kentfda@archant.co.uk

Copies of the form and posters to advertise your entry are available __at **www.kent-life.co.uk** and at **www.kentnews.co.uk**.

The closing date for entries is Sunday, August 7, 2016

Name.....

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By entering your details you will be automatically added to the Archant database, Archant will contact you with relevant offers and you can unsubscribe from this at any time. If you would prefer not to be contacted, please state 'no offers' on this form.

Newcomer of the Year
Sponsored by Clive Emson Land & Property auctioneers

Who? .....

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Where? .....

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Why? .....

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Independent food or drink retailer of the Year
Sponsored by Illuminate Skin Clinic

Who? .....

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Where? .....

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Why? .....

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Cafe of the Year
Sponsored by K Sports

Who? .....

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Where? .....

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Food Producer of the Year
Sponsored by Motorline Maserati

Who? .....

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Where? .....

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Why? .....

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Drinks Producer of the Year

Who? .....

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Why? .....

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Farm Shop of the Year

Who? .....

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Where? .....

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Farmers' Market of the Year
Sponsored by Perry's Chartered Accountants

Who? .....

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Where? .....

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Why? .....

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Pub of the Year
Sponsored by Eastwell Manor

Who? .....

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Restaurant of the Year
Sponsored by The Foxhunter Park

Who? .....

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Chef of the Year
Sponsored by the Canterbury Auction Galleries

Who? .....

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Customer Service of the Year
Sponsored by Fenwick Canterbury

Who? .....

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Where? .....

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Why? .....

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Kent Food & Drink Hero of the Year

Who? .....

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Where? .....

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Why? .....

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NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

This popular category is open to anyone in the food and drink industry who has started a new venture within the last 18 months.

We want to know what impact they have made on the local community and if they have started to achieve any success further afield.

Are they helping to promote Kent food and drink to a new audience or have they found a new way to promote an old favourite?

INDEPENDENT FOOD OR DRINK RETAILER OF THE YEAR

This celebrates that special food or drink shop that we all treasure.

The retailer who includes wonderful local produce in their offering and knows where all their stock comes from to make that special link between field and plate.

Our winner will have a special 'must-have' range as well as making a real contribution to their local community.

Paying a visit to their shop will be a treat in itself.

CAFE OF THE YEAR

This category has changed from the previous Tea Shop of the Year to include places that also specialise in coffee! Tea and coffee shops are an integral part of the Kent food and drink scene. Who makes the best tea and coffees, serves the nicest cakes and biscuits and the freshest scones? Are the sandwiches freshly cut and liberally filled?

Most importantly, are most of the ingredients locally sourced? We look forward to hearing your favourites.

FOOD PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

This category celebrates our local producers.

We are looking for someone who consistently provides both top quality local produce and service to their customers.

We are also keen to hear of any innovations.

If they're doing something new, we'd like to hear about it.

So if your local baker, grocer or farmer delights then please let us know.

DRINK PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

This category celebrates our local drink producers.

Whether it's gorgeous Kentish fizz or delicious juice, we want to find the producers who play such a vital role in the county's food and drink economy.

We want to know who you think makes the best drink, alcoholic or not, in the county, and what it is that makes it so special.

We are keen to hear of any innovations, so if they're doing something new, for example, introducing a fabulous new flavour, then we would like to all hear about it.

FARM SHOP OF THE YEAR

A good farm shop needs to have that extra-special something to tempt farmers away from their local supermarkets.

Are the staff friendly and knowledgeable, is the range of produce and the layout of an excellent standard, does your local farm shop offer a box scheme?

Is most of the produce sold there grown or raised on that farm, or nearby and if not would the owner be able to tell you where it is from?

Nominate your favourite farm shop now.

FARMERS' MARKET OF THE YEAR

The key to a good farmers' market Market is not only the range of produce and the quality of its stalls but also the principles that it supports – for example, does it work as a co-operative with other farmers? Is most of the produce sold there grown or raised locally? Are the stallholders welcoming and knowledgeable? ? Let us know so we can tell everyone the best place to go.

PUB OF THE YEAR

A good pub these days has to offer more than a warm welcome and excellent ale. We're looking for an inn that also offers delicious locally-sourced food, fantastic customer service and real value for money. Pubs are genuinely the hub of their local community.

If you know a great one, even if it isn't your local, let us all know.

RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR

The Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Restaurant of the Year needs to offer an incomparable dining experience, from the ambience to the service and most importantly the food. Is it locally sourced? Do they support local producers and are they recognised on the menu? Do they have local as well as international wines and champagnes and can the staff tell you more if you ask?

CHEF OF THE YEAR

Kent is blessed with some outstanding chefs working in a fantastic array of restaurants. The Chef of the Year should be someone who has devoted him or herself to serving the best possible food. They'll demonstrate technical ability, use of seasonal ingredients, presentation of the food and an understanding of how flavours work together. Above all, we are looking for passion – that magic ingredient that defines true greatness in the kitchen.

CUSTOMER SERVICE OF THE YEAR

Most of our awards recognise customer service in some form. This category celebrates this vital element for its own sake.

Do you know a person, organisation or establishment that offers fabulous service that goes above and beyond what you expect?

We all know excellent service when we have received it, now is your chance to get it recognised. If you know a person, company, producer, pub, shop or restaurant that is a delight to deal with, then let us know.

KENT FOOD AND DRINK HERO OF THE YEAR

Kent has a food and drink scene that is among the most vibrant in the UK - as you would expect from the Garden of England.

As well as being blessed with some of the final local produce around, the county also has a variety of fantastic eateries located in local towns and villages.

This category will be celebrating the individual who has made a positive impact on the county's food or drink community.

Do you know someone who goes the extra mile in order to help promote Kent to a wider audience?

Someone who has show that they are passionate about local produce throughout?

Now is the chance for you to nominate your very own Kent Food and Drink hero and give them the recognition that they deserve.

Get in contact with us and let us know who you think would be a worthy winner.

feedback

your say...

Send us your views.
Write to: Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP
Email: editorial@kosmedia.co.uk
Twitter: @kosmedia

Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

We can change EU by our choice

IN reply to Malcolm Brockman and others last week on the EU [KoS, letters], it is mere speculation, by a small number of Brexit economists, that we could trade without deals after leaving.

We are governed by the World Trade Organisation on such for one, and the old Commonwealth has moved on with the current head saying there'd be tough talks over any new trade arrangements; the same with each EU country.

A Trump-led USA would swiftly want a new and worse version of the TTIP 'deal' currently in trouble across the EU; and Tory minister Priti Patel has already said she'd like to slash social and employment rights for workers in the UK.

On migration, the Australian point system has allowed even more in, including many as 'cheap labour'; and the Dutch PM has said we'd likely face the same from the EU.

To say the EU cannot be reformed is defeatist. Since 1979, we vote for the parties we prefer to send MEP's to the parliament.

Each parliament then, as in Westminster, forms a majority from its members and then selects the Commission members, cabinet and president. A difference being that each country must have one member on the commission. No legislation can be passed without the consent of a majority in the EU parliament, and then by the council of (elected) ministers.

Thus, if on a pan-European basis the people largely all voted for parities which backed, fully or broadly, the Another Europe is Possible and/or Democracy in Europe Movement 2015 proposals they could form the parliament, select a new commission and thus begin to change treaties.

Electing national governments with similar aims would also help change things.

Difficult though this may appear, I will continue to back the EU, warts and all, over the mostly short-termist fears, small mindedness and protectionist policies of Brexiteers.

Ray Duff,
Folkestone

Perhaps we are all a bit simple

WITH both sides of the political divide promising all sorts of horror stories should we stay or leave the EU, they must imagine the voting public are easily led simpletons to be swayed by these exaggerations.

A recent competition run to invite the public to engage in naming the new scientific vessel from a selected list came up with, by a margin, Boaty McBoatFace.

The politicians may have a case.

S Reeves,
Herne Bay

LETTER OF THE WEEK

EU provides us with the rights to flourish

AS the EU referendum draws ever closer, I will be campaigning relentlessly to ensure voters know exactly how positive the European Union's influence has been for workers' rights in the UK.

Unfortunately, we're not going to hear these arguments from David Cameron. In fact, with the trade union bill on the table, it is safe to assume he sees these workers' safeguards as a continental inconvenience, in spite of his wish for the UK to remain in the EU.

We've heard how the free movement of people across the continent helps ensure we're able to holiday with ease in Spain, France, Germany, and all over mainland Europe, completely visa-free. What we've not heard enough about, perhaps, is how the fundamental right to a paid holiday from work is protected by the EU.

It is EU legislation, agreed with our European partners, that also gives us maternity and paternity rights at work. Additionally, it is the laws we created, with trade unions and alongside our European neighbours, that give us our robust health and safety rules. Rules which go a long way in reducing injuries and deaths.

As the fight for gender equality continues, It's also important to note that it is the EU that has enshrined the right to equal pay for equal work for men and women. Similarly, it's European legislation that protects us from workplace discrimination on the grounds of age, sexual orientation or religion.

As a worker in the south east, I would feel safer knowing that there is EU legislation safeguarding my basic rights, regardless of the party in power in Westminster. That's one of the reasons why I'm campaigning for Britain to Remain in the EU.

Keith Taylor
Green MEP for the south east

Let's not become German chums

THIS is what people have to decide; do you want the UK to be part of a German federal Europe or do you want the UK to return to an association of sovereign nations that are part of a common trading market. There is the rest of the world, not just Germany.

Ivy Pluckrose,
New Romney

Duff, you're not right, love Phil

SORRY, too many 'ifs' and 'maybes' in Mr Duff's remain argument [KoS letters 29.05] and with the prime minister having to get permission from 27 other countries for his very minor changes, I'd say quite a few 'no chances' as well.

The remain campaign has been unyieldingly dismal, isolated and defeatist. The message being that Britain is too weak and feeble to run its own country and needs a perpetual supply of immigrants.

We pay the 'great pretenders' in Westminster more than £50 million a year to make the laws, supply the grants and run the country, as they did pre 1972. I'm afraid there's no magic in the EU, no 'free lunch', no democracy and certainly no future, in this crumbling behemoth.

Phil Granger,
West Malling

Granger v Duff is relentless

OH what joy it is to return to our summer holiday home and be able to once again obtain a copy of KoS and to find that Phil Granger and Ray Duff are still going at each other hammer and tonges.

John Gamet,
Walmer

Small error on Smalling claim

I RATHER doubt Chris Smalling "caught the eye at Maidstone's Gallagher Stadium" [KoS, last week] before being snapped up by Fulham, as Maidstone only started playing there in the summer of 2012, and Smalling signed for Fulham in 2008.

I suspect it was at Bourne Park, Sittingbourne, where Maidstone were playing their 'home' games while in exile from the county town.

Colin Mann,
Maidstone

Belt up now about Manston

JUST when will the Manston Airport brigade give it a rest? Just because they have campaigned on the streets does not make them the vocal majority.

In truth, most level-headed people realise Manston has never worked and never created huge number of jobs.

It's time for a change and we should accept the airport was given a fair crack of the whip.

T Jones,
Broadstairs

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

Kent on Sunday will:

1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
3) Be written in clear, concise English.
4) Not be overly sensational.
5) Have a sense of humour.
6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.

images of kent

Memorial Arch, Folkestone

by **Ernie Jordan**

WIN GREAT TICKETS EVERY MONTH!

IN February, March, April, May and June, if your picture appears on this page, you'll be included in a monthly draw to win a pair of tickets to the Leeds Castle Classical Concert - one of the highlights of the year and which takes place on July 9.

So send us your photographs today to be in with a chance!

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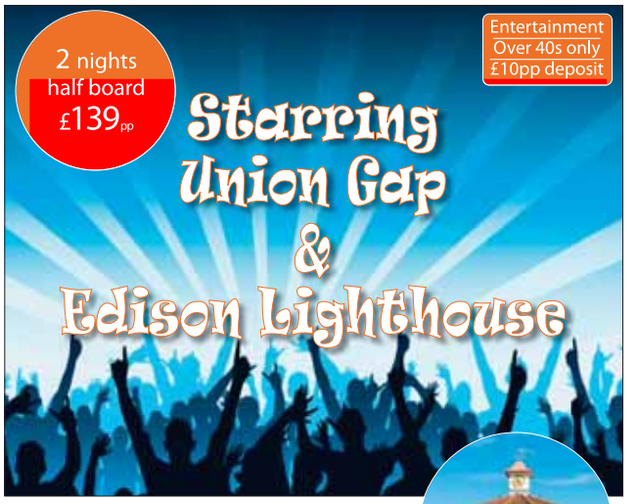

60s Party Break

4-Star Hinckley Island Hotel, Leics

Friday, 5 August, 2016 - Quote HK8-KOS

Join us for a private party break featuring 60s bands Union Gap and Edison Lighthouse at the 4-star Hinckley Island Hotel nestled in the heart of Leicestershire near Nuneaton and Market Bosworth. Relax in the hotel's indoor pool and fitness suite, the Triumph Sports Bar and Piazza Lounge Bar, or venture out to nearby attractions, before dinner and a fun-packed evening both nights.

INCLUDED: Entertainment • 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts • Free use of leisure facilities • 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV, tea/coffee tray and free wifi • Free Parking

60s Party Break

Stoke Rochford Hall, Lincolnshire

22 Aug, 16 Oct, 6 Nov, 2016 - Quote: SR-KOS

Enjoy a 60s-themed party break at Stoke Rochford Hall in the heart of rural Lincolnshire near Grantham. This historic mansion is set in 28 acres of landscaped parkland with accommodation in the Stable Courtyard and Woodland Lodge annexe and entertainment in The Venue, all located in the grounds. Enjoy a 60s tribute act both nights - Dusty Springfield and Tom Jones. Over 40s only. Price is £129pp.

Also available on 16 October with entertainment by Dave Grant (ex-Paper Lace) and a tribute to Dusty Springfield with Vicki Lambert; and 6 November with Simon Paul of Union Gap and 60s Song Book featuring Keith Slater. Price is £119pp

INCLUDED: Entertainment • 2 dinners & 2 breakfasts • 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV & tea/coffee tray • Free Parking

Amsterdam to Bruges River Cruise

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19 September, 2016 • Quote: AB9-KOS

Join us on our private charter of MPS Princess with great food and service and a fun and friendly atmosphere. We start in Amsterdam and have a full day and two evenings to explore before sailing to Kinderdijk, which has 19 windmills and a landscape straight from a Rembrandt masterpiece before heading for a harbour cruise in Rotterdam. Sailing into Belgium, we visit Antwerp - the diamond capital, and stunning architecture of Ghent before arriving in Bruges with a full day and two evenings to enjoy before returning to the UK.

INCLUDED: Escorted return rail travel from London St Pancras or Ebbsfleet or return flights with luggage from a choice of UK airports - supp't may apply • 7 night cruise sharing a twin rear cabin on Main Deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine, & soft drinks served at lunch and dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Morning and afternoon coffee/tea • Buffet breakfasts and lunches • Dinner served at your table - 4 courses • Late night snacks • Captain's dinner - 5 courses • Entertainment • Transfers abroad • Services of our Cruise Director on board

Carry on New Year Dance Party

Warner Bembridge, Isle of Wight

6 January, 2017 • Quote: NY1-3-KOS

Fans of Strictly Come Dancing and dance enthusiasts are in for a treat at our exclusive break on the Isle of Wight. We are taking over Warner's Bembridge Coast Hotel again with a tailor made weekend hosted by IDU World Ballroom Dance Champions Warren and Kristi Boyce, featuring Ballroom and Latin dance tuition, dance cabaret, social dancing, a Gala Ball and much more. With a huge 8,860 sq ft dance floor, reserved tables and seating for a maximum of 200 dance guests, comfort and space are guaranteed. Dance guests can also enjoy a packed entertainment programme in the show lounge with tributes to The Beatles, The Stylistics and Tom Jones, PLUS great food and free drinks from 6pm to midnight every night.

INCLUDED: Free drinks from 6pm to midnight every night - house beers and spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks and mixers • 3 nights sharing an en-suite chalet with TV and tea/coffee tray - main hotel upgrades available • 3 dinners and 3 breakfasts • Dance tuition • Dance cabaret • Social dancing • Gala Ball • 60s-themed entertainment in the show lounge • Return car ferry

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driving

By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

IMPORTANT: New E-Class has arrived – the saloon is already with us and the estate will be along soon too – and boasts new engines and technology

New E-Class still a crucial model

FIRST DRIVE: Mercedes-Benz still relies on the perennial appeal of the E-Class, despite the German premium brand's huge recent range expansion...

NOT so long ago, Mercedes-Benz had a small range dominated by one car – the E-Class.

Now it offers nearly 20 models and some of the greatest diversity on the UK market, from family hatchbacks to 4x4s, but the E-Class is still crucial to the German premium brand's business – and the latest generation has just arrived.

It will also soon be joined by the equally important estate model, famed as both posh and practical, usually with more load space than any premium rival – this time, 670 litres with rear seat backs up, and a total of 1,820 in 'seats down' mode.

For now, the newly-arrived saloon grabs the attention, with prices starting from a not unreasonable £35,935 for the E220d SE, featuring a technologically impressive new 195bhp four-cylinder 2.0-litre bi-turbodiesel returning up to 72.4mpg and 102g/km of CO2, and fitted with a nine-speed auto gearbox as standard.

It's also slightly faster than its equivalent 2009 E-Class predecessor, which produced 170bhp from 2.1 litres, and delivered up to 53.3mpg with 139g/km of CO2.

Standard new E-Class kit includes LED headlights and tail lights, sat nav, and M-B's Active Brake Assist; a clever safety addition that intervenes to operate the brakes without any prompt from the driver if it senses an imminent collision when travelling at anything up to 43mph.

M-B says it will still work above 43 miles per hour and help moderate damage and danger in an accident, but the brand won't guarantee against collision.

The posher AMG Line trim starts at £38,430 and comes with coveted AMG exterior styling including unique bumpers and side skirts, plus 19-inch alloys and more upmarket cabin finish.

Six-cylinder E350d models (from £44,930) are also available to order now for delivery later this summer. This 258bhp unit emits 133g/km CO2 while returning up to 55.4mpg.

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KENT LIFE

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£279	£20,210	£279.00	£1,500	£18,431.00	49 MONTHS	£8,258.62	£23,429.62	5.99%	

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Pulsar Range: URBAN 36.7-68.9mpg (7.7-4.1L/100km), EXTRA URBAN 58.8-85.6 mpg (4.8-3.3L/100km), COMBINED 47.9-78.5mpg (5.9-3.6 L/100km), CO_2 emissions 138-94g/km.

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Qashqai! "Bless you" say happy owners

Nissan's crossover pioneer has soared to even greater heights since the Mark II arrived in 2013, outdoing premium equivalents, writes **Steve Loader...**

Nissan Qashqai DIG-T Tekna

Price:	from £25,930
Driving appeal:	★★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	Mazda CX-5

NISSAN has always fared well in the UK.

For years it was the only country in the world where the Japanese marque outsold arch-rival Toyota.

It was also where Nissan chose to build a state-of-the-art plant in the 1980s, which became a paragon of efficiency and, importantly, signalled that the UK could once again build cars without industrial disruption.

In 2007, the same Sunderland plant then launched a British-designed model that has revolutionised Nissan's image in the UK and many other markets.

It was the Qashqai, recognised as the first crossover, appealing to buyers of conventional family cars, but also tempting those desiring MPVs (multi-purpose vehicles) or SUVs (sports utility vehicles).

Straddling many segments, it could hardly fail and rivals rushed to create their own crossovers, but none matched the original – it remained a UK top 10 seller up to replacement in 2013.

It transcended Nissan's mainstream position and won many customers who might have bought a premium badge car, but liked the Qashqai's good looks, 'made in Britain' status, 4x4 option and high specifications at sensible prices.

And it's been business as usual with the Mark II (from £18,545) that retained all that was good about the old car, yet took it upmarket.

The Mark II's styling inside and out is of higher quality, the dash is well arranged, interior and boot space is more capacious. The car also continues in front-wheel drive only or country set 4x4 formats, and to be built at Sunderland.

The surprise package powertrain is the entry level 115PS (114bhp) 1.2 DIG-T petrol turbo unit tested here in front-driven format: it's quite lively (0-62mph in 11.3 seconds) frugal if driven sensibly (50.4mpg official combined) with low emissions (129g/km: road tax zero in year one and £110/year thereafter).

It feels light on its feet too, fitting the Qashqai's ability to corner with composure - unlike so many high-riding rivals - and aids and abets the car's taut steering, whether in standard or sport mode.

It's so good that it's now a hard choice between the petrol turbo and the perennial star of the range, the 110PS (109bhp) 1.5-litre diesel, which limbos beneath the 100g/km CO2 emissions bar to qualify for road tax exemption, and delivers an astonishing 74.3mpg (official combined).

This engine starts at £20,375 – a premium of £1,830 over the petrol – so you need to be sure you will cover many extra miles to claw back that cash from the diesel's greater economy.

Our car was in high spec Tekna trim (from £24,290) bringing smart leather seats plus sophisticated infotainment system, and I seriously doubt that premium equivalents will make you feel any better than the Nissan – unless you are a badge snob.

Test-drive the new Hyundai i30 at Kent Hyundai.

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Representative finance example:

Model	i30 1.4i S
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On the road cash price*	£12995.00
Customer deposit	£2748.75
Manufacturers Finance deposit contribution	£500.00
Total deposit	£3248.75
Total amount of credit	£9746.25
Interest charges	£1484.99
Optional final payment	£4505.00
Total amount payable	£14479.99
Interest Rate % (fixed)	3.55% p.a.
Excess mileage charge per mile	14.9p
Estimated annual mileage	10000
Representative APR (%)	6.9% APR

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Fuel consumption MPG (l/100km) for Hyundai range: Urban 18.0 (15.7) – 80.7 (3.5), Extra Urban 32.8 (8.6) – 94.2 (3.0), Combined 25.2 (11.2) – 88.3 (3.2), CO_2 Emissions 261 – 84g/km. Fuel consumption: figures shown are based on official EU test figures. These are to be used as a guide for comparative purposes and may not reflect all driving results

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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

Licensing Act 2003

Notice of an Application for a Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that Week Street Sub Limited 11 Albion Place, Maidstone, Kent ME14 5DY has applied to the Licensing Partnership PO Box 182, Sevenoaks, Kent, TNI3 lGP on 9th June 2016 for the grant of a Premises Licence to use the premises Subway, 66 Week Street, Maidstone, Kent MEI4 1RR for the purposes of providing late night refreshment to be undertaken between the hours of 11.00pm and 5.00am Fridays and Saturdays without seasonal variation.

Any person wishing to view details of an application may contact the Licensing Partnership on 01732 227004.

Any person wishing to make representations about this application should make them in writing on or before 7th July 2016.

Licensing Partnership, PO BOX 182, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1GP licensing@sevenoaks.gov.uk

http:pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-licensing/

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with this application, the maximum fine on summary conviction being £5,000.

Gullands, 16 Mill Street, Maidstone, Kent MEI5 6XT
Solicitors on behalf of the applicant

Ref: 108/87603.1

PUBLIC NOTICE
Licencing Act 2005

An application has been made by: Chez Lons Hospitality Ltd (T/A 4Degrees) In respect to - Unit 9-10 Royal Star Arcade, Maidstone ME14 1LJ. We would like to apply for a license to allow the sale alcohol, the provision of regulated entertainment which includes live and recorded music at the premise and the provision of late night refreshment. Sale by retail of alcohol & regulated entertainment – During the hours of 10:00 until 00:00 Monday to Sunday with extended times on New Years Eve going into New Years Day, 10:00 until 02:00 on the 1st January. With the provision of late night refreshment between the hours of 11:00 until 00:00 Monday to Sunday with extended times on New Years Eve going into New |Years Day, 10:00 until 02:00 on the 1st January. The Register of Record of Application can be viewed during office hours at Maidstone Borough Council Licensing Office, Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JQ or http://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-licensing. Representation shall be made in writing by – 30th June 2016 It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application and the maximum fine (£5,000) for which a person is a liable on summary conviction for the offence.

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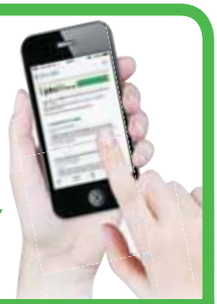

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Sprinters hitting form ahead of Rio

Adam Gemili and Dina Asher-Smith keep eyes on the prize

Athletics

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

SPRINTER Adam Gemili says he remains on track to be in top condition to push for glory at the Rio Olympics, despite coming home in sixth place at last weekend's IAAF Diamond League meeting in Birmingham.

The 22-year-old from Dartford is hailed by many as Britain's big sprinting hope. He just missed out on the 100m final at the London Olympics four years ago, and since then claimed the European championship crown for the 200m in 2014 and silver in the 100m at the Commonwealth Games that same year.

Running last weekend, he finished in a time of 10.29 seconds in what was only his second outdoor meeting since tearing a hamstring in breaking the 10-second barrier for the first time in Birmingham 12 months ago.

Sunday's performance was a lot different to the 9.97 clocking the Alexander Stadium crowd witnessed from the former footballer last June, but Gemili said he had learned from that experience.

"It's not the Olympic final or anything so I don't want to push myself too hard, which is what I did last year and it ended up putting me out for the season," he said.

"My body is in a great place. These meets are great, but they are not the be-all and end-all. The be-all and end-all is Rio, so that's what I'm working towards and hopefully I can go out there and deliver."

Meanwhile, Orpington's Dina Asher Smith continued her preparations for Brazil by coming fourth in the 100m final in Birmingham.

READY: Dina Asher-Smith likely to target 200m at Rio Pictures: ARCHANT

The Blackheath and Bromley Harriers member, holds British records for times across both 100 and 200m, and is likely to be looking at the 200m as her specialist distance come Rio.

The 20-year-old said: "I only opened my season last week, but I've focused on the mistakes I've been making since I was 15 and I'm hoping to pull those together and execute my race better. Hopefully, it'll be a really big year."

The Rio Olympics runs from August 5-21

Spitfires aim for back-to-back 50 over victories

Cricket

IF A street party celebrating the Queen's 90th hasn't claimed your weekend, then Kent look to deliver back-to-back Sunday victories today with a home clash against Glamorgan in the Royal London One-Day Cup.

And should Kent win again, the cheer might be heard as far as The Mall as Kent's promising season continues.

The Welshmen head to Canterbury as the team to beat with two straight convincing victories to their name so far in the competition. As a result, they sit top of the regional table.

But Kent can go into the match with confidence, having seen off Surrey in their opening game in the tournament last Sunday in dramatic fashion. Thanks to a powerful 66 not out, Alex Blake saw Kent home with just a ball to spare, after he struck a six to ensure a maximum points haul.

HIT: Canterbury will host today's cup game against Glamorgan

Now the Spitfire Ground will host what could be a mighty struggle and one which will see just how strong Kent's push for cup glory could prove to be this season.

They'll certainly have had plenty of fast-paced match action with six games in the space of a little over a week testing the squad to the limit.

Victory last Sunday was followed up by a win against Hampshire in the T20 on Wednesday night, another T20 clash at Sussex on Friday night. Glamorgan today, Somerset in the 50-overs cup on Tuesday and then, in the same competition, travelling to Chelmsford to face Essex this Wednesday.

The match starts today at the Spitfire Ground at 11am.

Sport Shorts

» Email **sports@kosmedia.co.uk** or call **Jamie Weir** on **01233 653481**

Nascar's Euro cousin revs up for Brands race

NASCAR leaps across the Atlantic and into Brands Hatch this weekend, as the track hosts American SpeedFest IV.

The on-track bill will be topped by the Nascar Whelen Euro Series (NWES), the only Nascar-affiliated championship operating on this side of the pond, and which promises to bring some of the big, bold and brash colour and spectacle which our US cousins love.

This year's NWES line-up includes Freddie Hunt, who is paying tribute to his father James, the 1976 Formula One world champion, who was famously disqualified from the British Grand Prix at Brands Hatch 40 years ago, before rebounding to claim the title.

His team-mate for most of this season has been Mattias Lauda, son of James's infamous title rival Niki, and the pair have been celebrating their fathers' legacy.

Brands Hatch motorsports event manager David Willey said: "Ticket sales are well ahead of 2015 and we're expecting a great crowd and a brilliant atmosphere."

BRIGHT: Colourful racing

DYE: Olympic star will appear at the 5km at Penshurst Place

Victoria Pendleton set for colourful race day

OLYMPIC cycling champion turned jockey, Victoria Pendleton, will be joining thousands at Penshurst Place next month to take part in 'the world's most colourful' 5km run.

Pendleton will share her message of empowerment, hoping to inspire women to make a difference in the world, in their community or in their personal life at the Clinique Run or Dye Event.

She is also supporting its partner charity, Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital, as her twin brother was cared for by the Hospital when being treated for childhood cancer as a young boy.

Some 5,000 are expected to take part in the event on July 3 with all participants encouraged to get head-to-toe covered in colour, before running, jogging, dancing or walking to the finish line.

Gills delight at season ticket sales

CLUB chiefs at Gillingham say they have been "delighted" after more than 80 per cent of season ticket holders renewed their tickets within a week of them going on general sale.

Season ticket holders from last year have until June 17 to renew theirs before they are offered up for sale again.

A spokesman for the club said: "The response from our dedicated fans has been great.

"We're delighted we'll be able to also welcome plenty of first-time season ticket holders to Priestfield next season; at the same time, the renewal rate from existing season ticket holders reiterates their committed support of the club."

Prices for the League One club start at £295 for adults and £35 for the under-12s.

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